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THE
MISCELLANEOUS
WORKS,
IN
PROSE and VERSE,
OF

Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe:

Published by her Order,

By Mr. *THEOPHILUS ROWE.*

To which are added,

POEMS on SEVERAL OCCASIONS,

By Mr. *THOMAS ROWE.*

And to the Whole is prefixed,

An Account of the LIVES and WRITINGS
of the AUTHORS.

V O L. II.

The THIRD EDITION, Corrected.

To which is now first added,

The HISTORY of *JOSEPH*, a Poem in Ten Books.

L O N D O N. 71712

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THE
CONSTITUTION
TENTH
SECOND VOLUME

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Miscellaneous Pieces

OF

Mrs. ELIZABETH ROWE.

V O L. II.

DIALOGUES.

DIALOGUE I.

Against ridiculing personal defects.

LOUISA.



OW could you be so barbarous, sister, to ridicule Mrs. *Moliere's* shape, and mimic her limping step, when she was hardly got out of the room?

MARIA.

THIS reproof from you, Madam, is really unexpected. I thought to render myself agreeable by imitating Mrs. *Moliere's* airs and graces: I never

yet heard you own that she was either crooked, or lame, or had any deformity in her person or mien.

LOUISA.

IF there was not a greater deformity in your mind than in her person, you could never ridicule those natural defects, which a generous and humane temper would pity, especially in one of her affable disposition and excellent understanding. Instead of despising such a form, you ought to thank God that yours is not like it.

MARIA.

THAT I do most heartily ! My devotions on this head are very ardent and sincere, whatever they are on other occasions.

LOUISA.

IF you had her mind, tho' with a worse figure than hers, it would be no disadvantage to you. There is such a beauty in her whole conduct, such a constant calm and sweetness in her temper, that one must be very malicious to overlook so much merit, and make cruel remarks on the defects of her form. I wish you would take this generous advice of Mrs. Barber's :

On vice your hum'rous vein display,

'Tis meritorious there ;

Or tow'ring vanity allay,

But oh ! misfortune spare.

It will not over-burthen your memory, to learn this excellent rule by heart.

MARIA.

I HAVE no poetical taste.

LOUISA.

I WISH you had ; it might give a more gentle and harmonious turn to your mind, and soften that severe dis-

disposition that makes you uneasy to yourself, and all your acquaintance. You seem to be in a state of hostility with all humankind: Nothing contents you. Some people are too tall, and some too short, some too fat, others too lean, and nothing is as it should be. You can find no excellence in all the works of God, excepting your own fine person; which one would think should be the model of all perfection, or you could not be so critical on every body else.

MARIA.

WHY really, sister, I see no reason to be discontented with my own shape or features.

LOUISA.

AND Miss *Squinny* is as well satisfied with her own beauty as you are with yours; and yet you have mimic'd the odd cast of her eyes so long, that a little more practice will make you downright squint: and if you imitate Mrs. *Moliere's* step much longer, I am afraid you will be quite lame.

MARIA.

WHO is ridiculing natural defects now?

LOUISA.

No, sister, 'tis not natural, but acquir'd and voluntary imperfections, that I am exposing.

MARIA.

You are my elder sister, and have my mother's partiality to support you; but really these admonitions are a little too assuming.

LOUISA.

I DON'T use to talk in so severe a strain, but Miss *Molly*, you have touch'd me on a tender point. The vast esteem I have for Mrs. *Moliere* will not suffer me to hear her expos'd, nor can I be unconcern'd for your

character. It would be want of natural affection, to see you make yourself hated and shunn'd, as the pest of society ; which must be your lot, if you carry this cruel censorious temper into all companies. What pleasure can you take in contemplating only on the blemishes of your own species ? I should think the beauties and graces of human nature a more elegant and agreeable speculation.

MARIA.

SISTER, are you almost come to the conclusion of this judicious lecture ?

LOUISA.

As soon as I have recall'd to your memory one or two instances of the justice of divine providence on this crime of mocking natural defects. You know *Jenny Flounce* broke her leg in the very action of mimicking her lame mistress, and *Miss Titter* has ridiculed her purblind sister till she is grown stark blind herself.—My dear sister, I perceive by the remorse and confusion that appear in your looks, I have said enough : I will only repeat a few lines that may give you a true notion of beauty, from a fine poem call'd *The Art of Charming*.

*What is the blooming tincture of a skin,
To peace of mind, to harmony within ?
What the bright sparkling of the finest eye,
To the soft soothing of a calm reply ?
Can comeliness of form, or shape, or air,
With comeliness of words or deeds compare ?
No, those at first th' unwary heart may gain,
But these, these only can that heart retain.*

DIALOGUE II.

Against gaming.

T R I F L E.

DEAR Lady *Harriot*, how am I rejoic'd to find you able to bear company again after your long illness? I have engag'd a charming party for *Quadrille*, as soon as ever you will appoint the time for their attendance at your own apartment.

H A R R I O T.

You are very obliging indeed, Mrs. *Trifle*, in taking such care to divert me; and the vanity of my past life has given you too much reason to believe I shall spend my future time to no better purpose: But this sickness has put my mind in another situation, and given me a quite different opinion of what I once call'd pleasure and innocent amusement.

T R I F L E.

I HOPE you are not grown so superstitious as to be afraid of gaming, or to think there can be any thing criminal in a pack of cards.——Why, my dear, you are quite sunk in spleen and vapours.—Pray did your grandmother ever teach you this notable rhyme? that

*Cards and dice**Are the devil's device.*

H A R R I O T.

PERHAPS there's more truth in this rhyme than you imagine: It appears to me a sort of infernal stratagem, by which some evil genius was leading me on to my own destruction, and the ruin of my family.——When I married my Lord he was in free and easy circumstances. By my attachment to cards, attended with constant ill luck, I embarras'd the tenderest and

best of husbands in a thousand difficulties. The natural liberality of his temper was restrain'd, to supply my extravagance. Those generous actions that adorn'd his state of prosperity, are now sunk in a gloomy anxiety how to answer the numerous debts my vanity had contracted. This thought sat heavy on my heart, when I saw his concern for me in this late illness. It touch'd me with exquisite remorse to find him so tenderly solicitous for a life so destructive as mine has been to all the peace and tranquility of his soul; that had clouded his gayest hours, and stain'd all the lustre of his former conduct——

T R I F L E.

I must interrupt you now in my Lord's defence. No man has a fairer character, he has never restrain'd your expences; whatever sums you lost, he had still the generosity to discharge your debts of honour.

H A R R I O T.

My debts of honour, as you call them, were indeed punctually paid; would to heaven my debts of equity and conscience were half so well discharg'd! That justice might have sav'd many an honest tradesman and his family from want and misery. But this curst attachment to cards harden'd my heart against all the sentiments of justice and compassion, and even effaced the tender impressions of nature from my heart. My children were neglected, and left wholly to the care of mercenary servants. My Lord, the best of men, found me always cold and insensible to his merit and tenderness. Instead of softening the perplexities of life, I plung'd him into new distress. His fondness would not suffer him to be severe, and his gentle remonstrances were insignificant. An ardor for gaming possess'd all my soul, *Ombre* and *Quadrille* ingross'd my whole attention; these were the subjects of my waking thoughts, and of my nightly dreams.

TRIFLE.

AND what more agreeable subject could employ your thoughts? But for the dear diversion of cards, life would be an insignificant thing, a mere blank. Were I debarr'd from that dear amusement, breathing would be a fatigue, and I should contentedly make my *exit* from the world.

HARRIOT.

AND pray what do you propose to entertain yourself with in the next? What schemes of diversion have you contriv'd, in which to pass the tedious length of eternity?

TRIFLE.

THAT's a concern so distant and uncertain, that it gives me no manner of trouble. These sort of chimeras never enter my brain, or if they did, I should find some little diversion or other, to banish such gloomy subjects.

HARRIOT.

BUT a time will come when these gloomy subjects will press with their full energy on your mind. The not thinking on death, will not make us immortal.—I should have talk'd just as you do now, before my last illness, but that conquer'd all my gaiety. The physicians durst not flatter me with life, nature seem'd to be making its last efforts to retain my flying breath. I thought every moment would be the fatal period of all my future hopes, and that death would immediately land me on some bleak and desolate shore, a naked, un-embodied spirit, shivering with horror and guilt among ghosts and gloomy spectres. My apprehension in this interval was more quick and penetrating than usual. I cannot express with what an energy these terrors were fix'd on my imagination. Had I been possessor of the whole world, I would have given it for some of those inestimable hours I had lavish'd away in guilt and vanity.

TRIFLE.

I SUPPOSE the parson of the parish put all these whimsies into your head: I hear he was very officious in attending you.

HARRIOT.

HIS attendance in this exigence was indeed my greatest blessing. He acted becoming the prudence and sanctity of his character; nothing could be more plain and sincere, and at the same time more gentle and compassionate. I believe he thought me past hopes of recovery, and was embarrass'd how to express himself in such terms, as might keep me from the opposite extremes of presumption, or despair.

TRIFLE.

WHY you are quite in the spleen. I begin to find your disorder contagious; if you talk on these subjects much longer I shall be in the vapours. But, dear Lady Harriot, are you resolv'd to bid adieu to *Ombre* and *Quadrille*?

HARRIOT.

I AM yet but a young penitent, and dare not speak too confidently; but I hope, by the divine assistance, to keep my resolution: And to free myself from this enchantment, by flying the temptation, next week my Lord will carry me into the country.

TRIFLE.

AND there I hope you'll live like Lady Grace, in *The Provok'd Husband*, spend your time in reading, in walking by a canal, or sitting under a great tree. O the insipid life! I can't imagine how you will pass the tedious summer, unless 'tis in catching butterflies, or making cowslip-balls for your children.

HARRIOT.

IF my time had never been worse imp'oy'd, I had been freed from the inquietude that now distracts my mind; while I reflect on my own guilt, and the perplexities in which I find my Lord involv'd by my extravagant conduct.

TRIFLE.

THIS is such a ridiculous way of reasoning, such an unfashionable manner of thinking, that I can't bear it. Indeed, Lady Harriot, this sickness has hurt your understanding. You are good for just nothing, but to retire with my Lord to his old mansion-house in the country; for with these odd sentiments, these singularities, you would make a strange figure in the *Beau Monde*: Your retirement will be very seasonable. Without interruption you may there go to church, and say your prayers; and instead of losing your money politely at cards, you may give it away in alms, and procure the insignificant blessing of the poor and needy with it, and get yourself the laudable character of a very good Christian.

HARRIOT.

I WISH I may deserve it! that glorious title is now all my ambition. It was but a few weeks since, I would have given all that mortality can boast, for the privilege of such a character. A fine lady—a toasted beauty, gave me little consolation, when I thought myself entering the dreadful dominions of death, turning into a pale and ghastly carcase, confin'd in a gloomy vault among skeletons, worms and corruption:—These were dismal scenes to one that never before had a serious thought of dying.

TRIFLE.

THESE are dismal scenes indeed! I shall dream of nothing but ghosts and spectres this whole night.—I beseech you, Lady Harriot, let us quit this whimsical

TO DIALOGUES.

subject, and talk no longer of death-beds and sepulchres.

HARRIOT.

Do you really believe you shall ever die? or if you should live thirty years longer, are you sure that you shall be no older than at this present instant?

TRIFLE.

I Have not thought enough of these distant events, to give you a positive answer. I am but a short-sighted mortal, and never presume to pry into futurity: At present I feel myself in perfect health, in the bloom of youth, without the least inclination to meditate on death, or old age, as I have no symptom of either. Passing the present hour gaily is my grand concern.

*I'll seize the jocund moments as they fly,
And all the ills of future fate defy.*

HARRIOT.

A VERY prudent resolution; could you stop the revolutions of time, and command the sun to stand still.

TRIFLE.

WELL, my dear, I have had a sufficient *Memento* of mortality for once. And when I come to visit you in the country, I shall expect to find you in your closet, with a *Prædise of Piety* in your hand, and a death's head and an hour-glass before you; or if your devotion should take a more romantic turn, perhaps you'll retire to some grotto, beautiful in the height of negligence, with your own fine flaxen hair falling over your neck, like *Mary Magdalen*, in that picture that hangs by you.—But I forget myself; you look as if you wanted rest, and so, dear Lady Harriot, I'll leave you *sans ceremonie*.

DIALOGUE III.

Against a life of pleasure.

CLERIMONT.

I AM surpriz'd, sister, to find you have spent this whole day at home, and more, to hear you have no evening engagement. Are balls and assemblies prohibited? or is the play-house lock'd up? or was you frighted with the sight of a ghost, in your last midnight ramble?

ARABELLA.

Nothing of all this, I am only trying the novelty of retirement. I have been running one dull circle of vanity these five years, in which every week, and almost every day, has past without any variety, a mere tedious repetition of the same follies.

CLERIMONT.

BUT, my dear sister, why would you put yourself to the trouble of so many experiments, before you would yield to the conviction of this great truth, that all below the sun is vanity? However, I am pleas'd with the change, but a little surpriz'd to find you grown so wise in an instant. This sudden illumination looks more like the effect of caprice than of reason. Pray, Madam, from what hour last night may I date this glorious reformation? or what was the occasion that you parted from the assembly so disgusted, and so tir'd of the world?

ARABELLA.

To disguise nothing from you, brother, I fancy the world grows tir'd of me. I have appear'd so constantly at all public entertainments, that people seem weary of seeing me; and every new face, tho' not, perhaps, so handsome as mine, engages the attention of all the pretty fellows. I may be as contemplative as I
please

please in a crowd, no body troubles his head about me, nor makes the least pretence to interrupt my meditations.

C L E R I M O N T.

THEN, Madam, I may hope for the honour of your company, in some of these vacant hours.

A R A B E L L A.

REALLY, Sir, you have little obligation to me, for making your house a sanctuary from the contempt of mankind.

C L E R I M O N T.

'Tis only the too great delicacy of your temper, that makes this supposition; time has not yet impair'd a charm in your face. But I have no design to compliment you with perpetual youth, nor would I have you fancy yourself quite so young, at six and twenty, as you was at sixteen.

A R A B E L L A.

You would sooner persuade me to reckon my age, like the *Egyptians*, by lunar years, and fancy myself fourscore,

C L E R I M O N T.

THERE is a greater decorum in setting yourself forward, than in going backward in life. For certainly the sun does not stand still, nor the year roll backward, nor will old rustic Time with his scythe and hour-glass, be persuaded to slacken his speed, in compliment to a fair lady. Declining autumn will soon overtake your youthful bloom; and however the fields again renew their verdure, a beauteous face, once decay'd, never regains a second spring.

A R A B E L L A.

WELL, my dear brother, you shall place me in what situation you will. I have no reluctance to be thrust back to the last broken arches in *Mirza's* vision, the gravity of my present temper suits very well with that period of life. You shall forget I am your sister, if you please, and fancy I am your great grandmother.

C L E -

CLERIMONT.

WHY really, Madam, I begin to have a great veneration for you, and am delighted with the sagacity of your temper; you are mightily improv'd with one afternoon's solitude. — But, dear Miss *Bell*, let me ask you one question: On what terms did *Carlos* and you part, at your last interview?

ARABELLA.

WHY, we parted, never to meet again. — This is a nice subject, and I beg you would drop it, and never name him to me for the future.

CLERIMONT.

I AM, Madam, your most obedient humble servant; and shall punctually observe your commands. If you keep this resolution, you will ease my heart of its weightiest care.

ARABELLA.

PUT yourself out of pain for my resolution. You know great alterations sometimes spring from trivial accidents, in the moral, as well as the political world. Indeed my conformity to the *Beau Monde* was often dissembled and insincere; half my follies were rather the effect of affectation than nature: I durst not presume to appear wiser or better than other fashionable people.

CLERIMONT.

I FIND then, 'tis ungenteel for people to be in their right senses, and that 'tis a ridiculous thing, to be wise or good beyond the standard of the mode.

ARABELLA.

WHY really, brother, with your sobriety of discourse and behaviour, you would make a very unpolite figure in some shining assemblies; and you would find it necessary to make some apology for being a reasonable creature,

creature, and must certainly excuse your intruding yourself among well-bred company, in your right senses.

C L E R I M O N T.

YOU give me a fine picture of the modish world; and when I frequent those shining assemblies you describe, I'll take care to ask their pardon, for not being out of my wits, and make the best excuse I can for coming among them, without being stark mad; but then I shall expect some apology from those gay animals, for presuming to walk erect, and putting themselves out of the class of their four-footed brethren, who act by instinct, and sport, and fight, and feed, and sleep, and die. — But, my dear sister, let me ask you, how, with your good sense and strict education, you have been able to spend these last five years in gaming, dancing, dressing and sleeping? Did you think this the end of your creation, and the grand concern of a rational and immortal being? Or could you ever, at night, reflect with satisfaction on one of the days spent in such a wild chase of vanity and extravagance?

A R A B E L L A.

SINCE you will take on you the office of my confessor, I think myself oblig'd in conscience to speak the truth. I have been so far from reflecting with satisfaction on my past conduct, that as soon as ever I found myself alone, and at leisure for thought, the review of my daily follies and indiscretions made me the most unhappy creature on earth. Sometimes my own ill address, at other times the fancy'd neglect of the company, sunk me in the vapours; and often a secret remorse for the guilt of so much time mispent, banish'd sleep from my eyes, and peace from my soul.

C L E R I M O N T.

AND yet, like the sun, you could rise again in the morning, and with fresh vigour begin the glorious toil, and run your diurnal race in the same circle of vanity.

— But

—But after such a train of disappointments, what could you promise yourself from the ensuing day, beyond what you found in the past?

A R A B E L L A.

I ALWAYS flatter'd myself that some nice circumstance, some fortunate concurrence of events, which never happen'd before, would render the next entertainment more complete than the last.

C L E R I M O N T.

IN this succession of vain expectations and blasted hopes, the generality of mankind waste their lives.

*The hoary fool, who many days
Has struggled with continual sorrow,
Renews his hopes, and blindly lays
The d'sp'rate bet upon to-morrow.*

*To-morrow comes; 'tis noon, 'tis night;
This day like all the former flies;
Yet on he runs to seek delight*

To-morrow, till to-night he dies. PRIOR.

HOWEVER this castle-building, this self-delusion is more excusable in the first than in the latter part of life; that declining season ought rather to be spent in a serious reflection on past errors, than in a visionary expectation of new enjoyments.—You find I am growing grave, why don't you interrupt me?—What pamphlet is that lying in your lap?

A R A B E L L A.

Oh, a very moral treatise, call'd the *Toy-shop*. If I did not resolve on a thorough reformation, I should be quite angry with the author for placing me in such a ridiculous light to myself. *Ven*y is quite out of favour; nor has my footman carried a compliment to any lap-dog of quality this morning.—You will give me leave

to read a speech of the master of the toy-shop on this subject.

HERE's a dog now, that never eat but upon plate or china; nor set his foot but upon a carpet or a cushion. Here's one too; this dog belong'd to a lady of as great beauty and fortune as any in England; he was her most intimate friend and particular favourite; and upon that account has receiv'd more compliments, more respect, and more addressees than a first minister of state. Here's another, which was doubtless a dog of singular worth and great importance; since at his death one of the greatest families in the kingdom were all in tears, receiv'd no visits for the space of a week, but shut themselves up, and mourn'd their loss with inconsolable sorrow. This dog, while he liv'd, either for contempt of his person, neglect of his business, or saucy and impertinent behaviours in their attendance on him, had the honour of turning away upwards of thirty servants. He died at last of a cold caught by following one of the maids into a damp room, for which she lost her place, her wages, and her character.

I SEE, brother, you are delighted with this satire.

C L E R I M O N T.

NOR can you be angry, my dear sister, to find this folly ridicul'd in a manner so genteel and sprightly.

A R A B E L L A.

I AM rather pleas'd.—Affectation is more easily cur'd than nature. This is a folly I can easily put off: I was only a mimick to Miss *Modish*, being unwilling she should outshine me in any part of a fine character. She lis'd so prettily, and talk'd such charming nonsense to her little *Shock*, that it rais'd my ambition to equal her in those nice accomplishments. But I was never sincere in my civilities to lap-dogs and monkeys. I may own to you, without detriment to my understanding, that I had always a secret contempt for the whole animal race.

Left unfinished.

L E T.



LETTERS.

LETTER I.

To ———



PERSON of your merit, Sir, need not wonder if you leave unknown friends in all company, and that you find one interested in your happiness, to whom you are almost a stranger. Some time since, I happen'd to be one of the company,

where your good humour and wit was the greatest entertainment: your sentiments were just and agreeable on every subject, but one, and that (among a great variety) chanc'd to be the immortality of the soul. I was concern'd, I confess, to hear you (in every thing else so reasonable) employ your arguments against the dignity of human nature, and the brightest privilege of mankind; without which reason is our greatest curse, an inseparable plague, and renders our lot less happy than that of the brute creation, who pursue pleasures proper to their faculties, without the tormenting remonstrances of conscience.

WHAT advantage can you men of pleasure propose, in divesting yourselves and the rest of mankind of this privilege of immortality? The prospect perhaps of a future hell may molest your tranquility: but after all, will confidence and raillery lessen its certainty? Are you arriv'd at a demonstration that there are no burning lakes to punish the vicious, nor celestial crowns to reward the virtuous? Are your principles grounded on unquestionable evidence? Or do you pretend to no more than an equal hazard that things may, or may not be as you wish them? Grant but this, and there is no excuse for your extravagance. Were a future state but a mere possibility, 'twere madness to stake infinite ages of bliss against the pleasures of a day: Even that short time is more than you can secure; you are altogether uncertain of the next moment's fruition of these trifles you value so much for their being, what you call, visible and present; and of this you are as uncertain, as you think the pious man is of all his visionary hopes and fancy'd paradise. In one sense yours is as much a life of faith, as his; for whatever you boast of the present, you are seldom pleas'd with it; the greatest part of your happiness, as well as his, consists in expectation and distant prospects: Yet the good man has this advantage, that his agreeable reveries will last as long as his life; and death, which alone can rob him of the glorious fiction, puts him for ever out of a capacity of lamenting his loss; while the libertine's golden dreams are perpetually broken and interrupted; every new attainment convinces him too sadly of his delusion; fruition dissolves the pleasing error, and leaves him in despair of ever reaching that point of happiness which his imagination forms. And if religion is a delusion, 'tis the most lasting and fortunate one in the world. But if there are indeed fields of bliss and shades of love, infinite pleasures and immortal day, you men of the world will find you have made a fatal bargain. Or should all these fine things prove the tales of mercenary priests, you are still the losers; for it must be acknowledged, that a licentious

life

life is attended with greater mortifications than a religious one. How easy are all the difficulties that virtue exacts, to those which our own unbounded passions impose! The most nice and refined luxury is accompanied with exquisite vexation, and the softest idols of our sense are our greatest plagues. Those toys, the women, Sir, that you and I so much admire, soft or severe, are our necessary tormentors; and we are greater sufferers by their kindness than their cruelty. 'Tis true, I have not much reason to complain of their favours, ** mais, Monsieur, vous êtes une homme fait à charmer les belles, & jouir les bonnes grâces des femmes.* This is your snare, and that which damns half the race of men. Could you escape but this, you might yet attain the skies, and bid fair for a celestial preferment; nor need it cost you so dear, as wholly to renounce the charming sex; you are not forbidden an honourable and lawful engagement, which has infinitely more charms than the mercenary caresses of a wh—re. To forfeit an immortal paradise for the undistinguishing favours of an impudent coquet, is the most desperate madness; 'tis to anticipate the torments below, and double one's own damnation.

BELIEVE me, Sir, I have not written this from an enthusiastic zeal: I am no bigot, nor fanatic; and if you knew me, you would easily take my word, that I am no blind votary to the priesthood. What I have said, is from a generous and humane sentiment, with a design worthy of that sincerity and friendship which one man of honour owes another. I beg you on this account to pardon the length and freedom of my letter; for I think it would be no ill-breeding to molest a fine gentleman, if he had a mind to damn himself. However, I'll impose no longer on your patience, but leave you

* But you, Sir, are a man made to charm the fair, and enjoy the good graces of the ladies.

you with this quotation from one of the greatest men in the world, *Monfieur PASCAL contre l'indifference des Athées,*

* *ENTRE nous, le ciel, & l'enfer, ou le néant, il n'y a que la vie, qui est la chose du monde la plus fragile; & la ciel n'étant pas certainement pour ceux qui doutent si leur ame est immortelle, ils n'ont à attendre que l'enfer, ou le néant. Il ny a rien de plus réel que cela, ni de plus terrible. Faisons tant que nous voudrons les braves, voilà la fin qui attend la plus belle vie du monde. C'est en vain qu'ils détournent leur pensée de cette éternité qui les attend, comme s'ils la pouvoient anéantir en n'y pensant point. Elle subsiste malgré eux, elle s'avance, & la mort qui la doit ouvrir, les mettra dans peu de tems dans l'horrible nécessité d'être éternellement ou anéantis, ou malheureux.*

I am, Sir,

with all imaginable sincerity,

your humble servant,

CARLOS.

* Between us, heaven and hell, or annihilation, there is only this life, the frailest thing in the world: And as heaven, certainly, is not for those who doubt whether their souls are immortal, they have only to expect hell, or annihilation. There is nothing more real than this, nor more terrible. Let us affect bravery as much as we please, this is the end of the happiest life in the world! In vain do they turn off their thoughts from that eternity which awaits them, as if they could annihilate it, by not thinking of it: It remains in spite of them, it draws near, and death that must remove them into it, will in a little time place them in the horrible necessity of being either eternally nothing, or miserable.

LETTER II.

ALEXANDER to CLERIMONT.

I MUST reproach your unaccountable delay in an affair of such importance, as I intrusted you with, and which you are engag'd to accomplish, or lose your life in the attempt. And what is your life, that you should deliberate on such a glorious occasion? what is your life, that you should balance it against your honour and conscience? against the present safety and, perhaps, immortal happiness of the fair *Lucilia*? Is it such a glorious thing to breathe, to eat, to sleep, that you should prolong your hours to so little purpose, and lengthen your existence for such inferior ends?

You can but die, my Lord, and considering death abstractly as the period of human action, a violent or natural death is just the same; but considering death in another relation, a man that falls a sacrifice in the defence of virtue and the cause of truth, has infinitely the advantage of one who resigns his breath to the necessity of some fatal disease.

LET the event be what it will, you are absolutely oblig'd to attempt the rescue of my fair proselyte from the tyranny of her bigotted and superstitious guardian, and to carry her into some protestant country. If you should abandon her in this exigence, she will be reduc'd either to deny the faith to which her soul assents, and hazard her eternal ruin; or by confessing the truth, to expose herself to the fury of blinded zeal.

To this, you know, I fell a victim, and that in the most base and treacherous manner. 'Twas, I confess, my Lord, with the utmost reluctance, that I accompanied you in your travels to *Rome*, and nothing but the absolute

absolute commands of my father could have compell'd me to it. Such an abhorrence had I for holy fraud and tyranny, such a contempt for the solemn fopperies of the popish religion, that I knew to what the openness of my temper would expose me. I had ballanced the hazard, and resolv'd upon no consideration to part with my integrity. I was unpractis'd in the arts of evasion; my tongue always spoke the language of my heart, and would not for all the sun encompass'd have utter'd a known falshood. In the common forms of conversation I never deviated from the rules of sincerity; but where religion was concerned, I would not have purchas'd life with all its joys, by the shadow of a lie, by the least equivocation. This was the resolution I made at my entrance on the popish dominions. You was often an uneasy witness of the hazard I ran, by shewing an open contempt of their idolatrous processions. Yet, perhaps I was to blame in treating their sacred vanities with an offensive levity, when a serious conviction had been more successful: But I could not view their consecrated trifles with any manner of gravity, nor conceal my contempt of holy legends; nor durst I incur the guilt of such dissimulation as I saw practis'd by my own nation. I had many presages of the fatal event, while I secretly defied hell and all its agents, their flames, their racks, and every infernal engine. A thousand illustrious witnesses had trod the arduous path, and led the way to glory: I rather courted than avoided the happy destiny, and spoke and acted with the same liberty, as I would have done in a protestant country.

THE freedom, however, which I took in conversation with the Cardinal * * * was with the greatest security. My frequent visits to that generous man gave me an easy access to his beautiful niece, who from the gentleness of her uncle's disposition found more liberty than the *Italian* customs allow'd. From the moment I saw her I lov'd her, and could not but observe the attention with which she listen'd to my discourses of a

religious nature. With a freedom becoming the innocence of her thoughts, she gave me frequent opportunities of conversing with her: By this I discover'd that the virtues of her mind answer'd all the promise of her face, and animated her outward form with such unrival'd elegance and beauty, that even I, who have seen celestial perfection, still think her lovely. But 'tis her heavenly disposition that has kindled that divine affection, which I dare avow in these serene and holy regions, where nothing impure shall ever enter. She is not more the care of her guardian angel than mine.

As Heaven gave my arguments success, and brought the gentle convert from the darkness in which she was educated, I have a particular concern to secure her tender mind from any temptation to a relapse into her first superstition. Her own fears, with my importunity and assurance of the most honourable protection, prevail'd with her to consent to the plan I had laid for her security; which I intrusted to your care, when I found the wound was mortal, which I receiv'd from the treacherous friar, at the entrance of a monastery.

BELIEVE me, my Lord, your conscience, your honour is engag'd to discharge the trust I deliver'd to you with my expiring breath; and I renew my importunity, that you would protect the helpless maid, and transport her to some place where she may enjoy her liberty, safe from the terrors of the infernal Inquisition.

SHE is worth the care of angels, and 'twill be a noble satisfaction to your mind, when you reflect that you have protected such virtue. These are actions which must meet with approbation in the empyrean courts, and are subjects worthy the admiration of the splendid societies of heaven. These beneficent spirits interest themselves in the affairs of mortals, and give every generous attempt its just and full applause. Adieu.

ALEXANDER.

LETTER

L E T T E R III.

To the Honourable Mrs. ———

MADAM,

1697.

I COULD not hold my pen to write to any person in the world besides your Ladyship; but I am so transported to hear from you, and have such a mind to say something to you, that my soul exerts its utmost force, as resolv'd to conquer the weakness of my body. ——— I have been a long time hovering on the very edges of the immaterial world; and tho' the prospect look'd all dark and formidable, yet my soul could not fancy herself on the very precipice of the invisible world, and cease to be inquisitive, any more than she could cease to be a soul. My curiosity was so great to know how un-embodied spirits act, and what regions they inhabit, that I could willingly have taken a leap in the dark to be satisfy'd.

*We see the waves, and hear the billows roar,
The dashing rocks, and hollow whistling wind.
'Tis a wide leap to that dark, dreadful shore,
And none come back to tell us what they find.*

I CAN hold up my head no longer, but yet, Madam; I'll stay to tell you (for perhaps I may never write to you more) that the cold embraces of death shall never freeze up the kindness I have for you: No, the sacred flame shall glow in my breast to eternity. I'll be your guardian angel, and leave paradise to converse with you; and when fate shall call you away, I'll be the first kind spirit that shall greet yours, and with a thousand celestial songs welcome your arrival to the blest land of love; and to indear myself the more to you,

My

*My soul I will so much conform to thine,
Thou scarce shalt know thy own bright soul from mine.*

AND now, Madam, farewell ; if I die I shall resign my breath as calmly as infants fall asleep, and with a spirit becoming

Your friend and servant.

P. S. 'Tis too much, that Mr. ——— should be concern'd for my illness. My service to him, and tell him I'll find him out among his brother angels, and entertain him with my songs in requital.



L E T T E R IV.

To the same.

MADAM,

JUST as your letter came, I was going to take the air, instead of *steel*, for the spleen, as you call it ; but I rather flatter myself, that this chagrin is the pure effect of reason and reflection. I am tir'd with whatever I have yet enjoyed in the world, and expect no greater satisfactions here. And, for my part, I can't amuse myself with trifles, nor relish those insipid things, that, with the greatest part of the world, pass for the very essentials of happiness ; and were I never to enjoy pleasures more sublime and rational, methinks, I could this moment throw up my title to immortality. I am cloy'd with all the impertinences that attend human life, and long to know what novelties the invisible regions have to entertain me with. I can find no gust in any thing but the thoughts of being plung'd in immortal pleasures, and being regal'd with infinite beatitudes.

I HOPE, Madam, I need not ask your pardon for growing serious on a subject like this; since to be otherwise, when I believe myself upon the very borders of eternity, would be a levity that my own reason would reproach me with for ever.

YOU may call it spleen, or fancy, or what you please; but I think it more reasonable to believe it the impulse of some friendly spirit, to prepare me for the important part I am shortly to act.

IF you never hear from me again, be assur'd, I shall carry my affection for you to the regions of peace and amity, and cherish the gentle disposition till we meet again.

*And if on earth we taste such sweets in love,
How boundless will its raptures be above?*

Adieu.

MY service to Mr. ———; he talk'd of reading Charnock's sermons, but not knowing whether he'll carry them to L———, I did not send them now; but tell him, if he will, he may send for them to-morrow, and keep them as long as he pleases. 'Tis pity, when there's so much divinity in the world, people should be forc'd to read *Ludlow's Memoirs* on Sundays.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R V.

To the same.

1697.

WELL, Madam, you shall e'en have it your own way: I have the vapours, am lost in spleen; for what else could put such odd conceits into my head as these, that I am mortal, that the date of my life is uncertain,

uncertain, that perhaps I may never see another rising sun, or before the close of another evening,

*My soul may leave this tenement of clay,
And to an unknown somewhere wing its way.*

MR. NORRIS.

Future securities are indeed very impertinent cares, and a box of pills is, without doubt, an excellent remedy for such melancholy whimsies as these.

BUT without raillery, Madam, should I recover my health, and get rid of these dangerous symptoms, you cannot tax me with superstition, for making the best provision I can in a matter of so vast consequence. While people are in their right senses, it cannot be an indifferent case to them, whether they are to be happy or miserable in an endless duration.

NOT that I think it necessary to a future happiness, to quit all the innocent enjoyments of life, or that I am contracting such intimacies with celestial beings, as to grow indifferent to my earthly acquaintance. I am not yet so mortify'd, as you imagine, to human passions. There is an eternal propensity in my soul to love and beneficence: I receiv'd the generous principle with the breath of life, and find it inseparable from my existence; nor can time or distance blot from my memory the intervals of pleasure I have enjoy'd in your conversation.

BUT I have no more to say to your Ladyship on this subject, for I don't design to engage you against me too; therefore I desire your leave, Madam, to say the rest to Mr. ——— for I have recollected myself now.

SIR, I am unwilling to lose an opportunity of telling you, that my inclinations to solitude are neither the effects of melancholy, or ill-nature, or the narrow prin-

ciple of believing I was born wholly for myself; much less do they arise from any affected delicacy, or ambition of being thought better and wiser than other people. I aspire to no character above that of a reasonable creature. But you know, Sir, there are nobler inducements to retirement than these; and if I tell you, that I chuse it as the greatest improvement of my reason and morals, and the best method I can find to be happy, I hope you'll grant I have given you a very fair account of those resolutions, which you are pleas'd to think so fantastick and unreasonable. I confess, Sir, one may think in a crowd, and make some imperfect reflections; but 'tis *alone* that you form your most exact and impartial notions. 'Tis then you examine vulgar prejudices, and reject the little principles of the bigotted and superstitious; 'tis then you fortify yourself against the tyranny of custom, and the impositions of persons, who do a thousand unreasonable things themselves, and gravely tell you, 'tis singularity and ill-breeding not to imitate them.

BUT then you tell me, 'tis possible to think too much. This, Sir, from you is an extraordinary caution; yet I as little fear being too thoughtful, as being too wise or good: I am sure the more we exert the force of our understanding, the more clear and sublime our ideas are. And suppose the worst, that these intense operations of the mind should waste the spirits, 'tis in doing the business of life apace; and when our parts are acted, we are ready to quit the stage. Nor is it a long, but happy, life which I would chuse; and I am convinc'd that privacy is the most likely way to make mine so.

———— Nor by me e'er shall you,
 You of all names the sweetest and the best,
 You muses, books, and liberty, and rest,
 You fountains, fields, and floods, forsaken be,
 As long as life itself forsakes not me.

COWLEY.

HERE

HERE my hours are absolutely at my own disposal, nor am I oblig'd to devote any part of my time, (that invaluable time which flies, and never again returns) to trifling and ceremony. Here I need not flatter the vain, nor be tir'd with the impertinent, nor be confin'd to a certain set of insipid subjects, that have been drain'd a thousand times over. But here my thoughts can entertain me with endless variety; and when I am weary of reflecting on the impertinent hurry that mortals make in passing to their graves, the sordid designs of some, and the splendid follies of others; with the last contempt I e'en bid mankind farewell, and launching out into the boundless ether, entertain myself with much more noble and charming speculations.

*I view the spangled wonders of the sky;
Where I observe, with an admiring sense,
Their motion, magnitude and influence.*

*Ranging thro' heav'n's vast tract, methinks, I hear
Th' harmonious music of each tuneful sphere,
Swarms of new worlds discover, and survey
The sparkling glories of the milky way.*

*Now thro' th' empyrean heav'n I freely rove,
And feast my senses on the throne of Jove,
View those eternal mansions, where the blest
Are rapt with joys too great to be exprest.*

I HAVE done, Sir, now, which I believe you'll think very good news.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R VI.

To the same.

I RECEIV'D your Ladyship's long letter, and another since; they were both extremely welcome, but how welcome I want words to tell you. According to your Ladyship's order, I writ a letter, and sent it to *Frome*, to inquire for somebody that went to *Sherborn Fair*, but could hear of none that design'd to go. However, if they had, I should have order'd the bearer to have left it at philosopher *Fox's* shop, to have sav'd *Michael* a few steps. For the truth of it is, your Ladyship had set him a pretty odd kind of a task; and I warrant he ask'd every fellow that stood with his mouth open, his back against a post, and one of his legs cross'd over his staff, whether he liv'd at *Frome*? and if he did, whether he had no letter about him for his lady? — However, the worst of it was, *Michael* lost his labour; for which I am very sorry, and shall never be easy, 'till I think your Ladyship has receiv'd this, to inform you that I was not only disappointed then of sending to *Sherborn*, but likewise the Saturday after to *Bruton*. For I am vain enough to measure your Ladyship's friendship by my own; and if I am deluded, I would not be undeceiv'd for the world; no, I'd rather indulge the blest fiction 'till I die. And now I think of dying, I desire your Ladyship to speak to Mr. ——— that, when he prays for long life for himself and his friends, he'd be pleas'd to leave me out of his petitions, for I don't intend to stand to them; no, nor to your Ladyship's neither, tho' I must confess sixty years is a more reasonable time than an hundred. However, I'll add my prayers to your Ladyship's, for double the time for you. You are happy, Madam, and will be so, I hope, when I am lodg'd in a silent grave; therefore you may wish for long life; but

They

*They merit not to live at all,
Who care to live unblest.*

I FANCY I have more news to tell you besides this; and some of it is, that *Stud* was here yesterday, and lodg'd here one night. He's set up for a quack now, and keeps all the markets. *Dinah* got a copy of verses from him, that was to be sent to his mistress; and to give you a taste of his poetry, I'll repeat two of his verses to your Ladyship.

*Then do but think, dear Madam, how I smart,
When all your darts stick hissing in my heart?*

MUCH such another piece of poetry came yesterday to kiss my fair hands; 'twas brought by a man in a blue coat, the colour of your livery. He would deliver the letter himself, and before I open'd it, I ask'd him whence it came? he told me from *L——*; so I broke it open with all the impatience of love. The hand was very much like your Ladyship's, and before I look'd on the letter that came with the poem, I fell to reading the verses, and wonder'd at my heart what had put your Ladyship into such an unlucky versifying humour; for I must needs say, that I did not like them, no, tho' I thought them your Ladyship's; and if any thing could have made me partial, that would. But I had not read much of the poem before I had the curiosity to look over your letter (as I then thought it) but when I found a gentleman's name subscrib'd to it (tho' I neither knew, nor car'd a straw who the gentleman was) it put me into a rapture, and I began to thank the stars that your Ladyship was still in your wits. And because you shall pardon these impudent thoughts of mine, see how the mighty bard begins:

*When Ver began to peep from ether's coasts
On the terraqueous globe, and num'rous hosts
Of arid, puddling objects all around
Encompassing the frozen ground.*

I'll shew it you, if I don't die of a broken heart before I see you again: But you shall have a little more of it now.

*Lo! Philomela does prepare to sing
Her warbling anthems to the joyful spring.
She peeps her radiant head
Up from her grass-green bed,
And among circumambient notes,
She's known from all their charming throats, &c.*

Poor Pegasus! thou wast never so wretchedly rid before, except when Sbud got astride thee.

I THINK it will be convenient to leave room to subscribe myself

Your, &c.



L E T T E R VII.

To the same.

IF you knew the sentiments of my heart, you would find no reason to complain of me. Can you think me so stupid, as not to prefer such conversation as yours, to musing away my hours in a chamber, if I really thought myself fit for society? but my soul is perfectly untun'd,

untun'd, and you have more reason to pity than reproach me. You may imagine, that conversing with a man of Mr. Rowe's elegant taste and good sense, must have given me a perfect disgust to all the society this country affords. I own it has had that effect, and I love the town very well: But a gloomy turn of thought gives me such an aversion to company, that all the importunity of Mr. Rowe's relations cannot make me resolve to go back to them; tho' I have an affection for them more tender than all the ties of nature.

I AM extremely pleas'd with the fine characters the world gives of Lady ——— and Lady ———: How much must you merit, whose example has given such perfect patterns of virtue to the world! I never read the *Spectator*, but I apply all his characters of a fine woman to you. I don't use to make speeches of this kind, you know, therefore you may depend on the sincerity of,

Madam,

Your, &c.

P. S. I hope by this time you have procur'd Dr. Scot's works; for I am sure you'll be extremely pleas'd in reading them. I read lately, in one of his books, a discourse call'd *Christ's regal acts*; where he treats of the last Judgment in such a surprizing manner, that no poetical description can go beyond it. I know you will be transported with it, and I shall scarce enjoy myself 'till you have read it. 'Tis in the second volume of his *Christian life*. Pray make me easy, and read it as soon as you can.

L E T T E R VIII.

To the same.

1717.

MY letters ought to be call'd epistles from the dead to the living, for I know nothing relating to this world, to entertain my surviving friends with; nor are people very fond of keeping a correspondence with ghosts and phantoms, or receiving intelligences from another world; and as there are no shades in these desolate regions of greater consequence than myself, nothing happens remarkable enough to bear a recital. When I was alive, I never was very fond of talking of myself; but being the greatest novelty in this place, I am now forc'd upon the subject, for want of something more considerable. 'Tis possible; I find, to be happy in the absence of all that people call amusement and diversion. When the mind is in a situation superior to the changing scenes below the sun, in pursuit of boundless and immortal bliss, the soul with a noble freedom ascends the celestial heights, in search of its great original, the fountain of its existence, and centre of all its hopes.

*All other joys are visionary bliss,
But here is all substantial ecstacy.*

But were these gay speculations a delusion, let me be thus deceiv'd, 'till death shall end the pleasing dream. Were the Christian heaven as great a fable as the poets *Elysium*, 'tis a fable so beautifully contriv'd, that I would not exchange it for the gloomy scheme of the most sagacious free-thinker; rather let me indulge the charming delirium, and entertain myself with the transporting fiction, 'till that and my existence meet their final period.

IF I liv'd among mortals, I should certainly know how to direct to Lady ———; but being in a state of separate existence, this ignorance is excusable: Yet, whether I am dead or alive, I am always,

Madam,

Your, &c.



LETTER IX.

To the same.

MADAM,

1720.

I CAN'T forbear expressing my concern for you under this severe affliction of the death of my Lady ———. 'Tis impertinent to reason, and against the dictates of nature, or else you might satisfy yourself with the extraordinary character she has left behind her, and her rest from the misfortunes of life.

*Thou best of all thy sex! impiety
Itself would drop a sacred tear on thee;
Had savages thy gentle aspect view'd,
To softness all their rage had been subdu'd.*

My concern is too sincere and tender, to say any more upon this subject.

I am, &c.

LETTER X.

To the Honourable Miss ———.

MADAM,

1712.

I SHOULD be very happy, if I could persuade myself that you can be half so sensible of the want of my company, as I am of the loss of yours; and I certainly make myself a greater compliment than I do you, when I tell you, that I find your early wit and pretty turn of thought perfectly agreeable and entertaining.

*Your growing wit shall gain immortal fame,
And ev'ry muse shall learn Mirtilla's name;
Nor less shall be the conquests of your eyes,
When all your charms shall to perfection rise.*

I OUGHT to take more pains about every thing I write to you, than I have done about these lines; but I know, Madam, you have good-nature enough to excuse

Your, &c.

LETTER XI.

To the Right Hon. the Countess of ———.

1716.

I AM extremely pleas'd to hear you express such a tender concern for my Lord ———. I am glad you are so well acquainted with the power of a just and innocent passion; and I hope public disorders will never interrupt your happiness, and that all your Ladyship's fears

fears will soon vanish. Virtuous lovers are the care of heaven, and the guardian angels will protect a man of my Lord ———'s merit.

THIS grave way of writing, I am afraid, is not very agreeable to your taste, and you will think it the dismal effect of my sober contemplations; but it will be impossible for me ever to be more gay, unless I could forget Mr. Rowe, and I shall sooner forget myself and all the world.

*For him all thoughts of pleasure I forego,
For him my tears shall never cease to flow,
For him at once I from the world retire,
To feed in silent shades a hopeless fire.*

BUT I must, in charity to your Ladyship, leave this subject, and desire you to believe, that

I am, &c.



LETTER XII.

To the same.

MADAM,

1716.

THE loss of such letters as mine does not require much apology. If I could have wrote any thing entertaining, I should not have been silent, after so agreeable a letter as that I received from you; but I was not willing to put you in the spleen, in recompence for the satisfaction you gave me. However I shall do it now, for I can't be easy till I have fill'd my letter with these melancholy lines out of the tragedy of *Jane Grey*.

*My soul grows out of tune, it loathes the world,
Sickens at all the noise and folly of it ;
And I could sit me down in some dull shade,
Where lonely contemplation keeps her cave,
And dwells with hoary hermits ; there forget myself ;
There fix my stupid eyes upon the earth,
And muse away an age in deepest melancholy.*

IF this finds you full of the same tender fears you had for my Lord ——— when I saw you last, 'twill but indulge your grief ; but I hope you have now more gay expectations.

IF you come to *Witham*, I beg you to remember your engagement to see me, which, however insipid all other kinds of pleasure are to me, will be a great satisfaction to—

Your, &c.



LETTER XIII.

To the same.

1719.

THERE is not in the *English* history a more beautiful character than that of Lady *Jane Grey* ; and I am not surpriz'd to find you charm'd with the shining figure she makes in Mr. *Rowe's* tragedy. You seem to have an equal softness of temper, and a resembling delicacy in your way of thinking. Your sentiments had certainly been the same with the young heroine's, if you had the same part to act, that of a martyr, which I hope you never will. Not that I should envy you that illustrious character, or am at all unwilling you should lose your head, on condition you could set it on again with as much dexterity as *St. Winifred*,

fred, without the least disadvantage to your fine person.

I SHOULD have been too modest to have troubled you with the inclos'd, if I had known how to have directed to Lady ———. This ignorance would be inexcusable in any other part of the world; but the honest people here know so little where to find Lady ———, that they could not inform me where King George himself resides. If I liv'd in a cave, I could not be more ignorant of what passes in the *Grand Monde*. I have indeed some imaginary regions of my own framing, some poetical dominions;

*Where fancy in her airy triumph reigns,
And spreads her gay, delusive scenes.*

BUT I believe you will leave me to the unenvy'd enjoyment of these visionary worlds, without the least curiosity to know what passes there.

I am, &c.



LETTER XIV.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOUR letters never fail to give me some intervals of pleasure, be the subject what it will; but the pleasure is heighten'd to hear you express such a generous satisfaction on a public account, and the prospect of the future happiness and welfare of your country. I hope your fears for Lady ——— are vanish'd by this time, and that Heaven will long continue an example of such early virtue to the world. But how uncertain are human things!

————— *O empty name*
Of earthly bliss ! 'tis all an airy dream !

I CANNOT but own, I am secretly pleas'd that you find the gay expectations from this world all deluding and treacherous. You know, Madam, this is not from any malice in my temper, for I wish you all the happiness that would not be prejudicial to pleasures more noble and lasting. The justness of your sentiments from such early reflections, and amidst all the enchanting appearances of life, confirms me much more in a contempt of the world than all *Seneca's* morals.

*Grant me, O virtue ! thy most solid joy,
 Grant me the pleasures of the mind,
 Pleasures which only in pursuit of thee we find,
 Which fortune cannot marr, nor chance destroy.*

I am, &c.



LETTER XV.

To the same.

MADAM,

I SHOULD have wrote to your Ladyship before now, but I thought your concern too just and sincere, to be treated with ceremony. Indeed I am ill qualified to write epistles of consolation. The wise, doleful things, that people vex their friends with on those occasions, appear to me more like a farce than a just sense of their grief. People may talk like good Christians at their ease, but pretty sentences and formal speeches are very trifling remedies to a real and unaffected sorrow.

You

You see, Madam, I am ready to justify all your concern for Lady ———. Not that I think there is any thing melancholy in an early death, after a life so virtuous. Your charming sister has, in my opinion, quitted the stage very gracefully, and in all the decorum of youthful charms and piety. Mr. *Collier* tells us in his *Essays*, that if the sun was never to rise again, it would be much more glorious for him to fall from the skies with all his light and heat, than to gain a few hours only to languish and decline.

My thoughts are not at present intirely consistent.— I have been reading my Lord *Shaftesbury's Moralists*, which has fill'd my head with beauty, and love, and harmony, but all of a divine and mysterious nature. However superior his notions may be to my capacity, I have been agreeably led on thro' I know not what enchanting scenes of happiness. I wish you would read it, for it would make you the most charming and agreeable enthusiast in the world. Whether I am in my right senses at present, I cannot tell, but you may be assur'd

I am, &c.



L E T T E R XVI.

To the same.

MADAM,

I CAN hardly read your Ladyship's letter for tears. In the circumstances you are in, I can dispute none of your commands, especially one so agreeable to myself, as that of waiting upon you, if in your gayer thoughts you should insist on it. If (as you fancy) I yield with some reluctance, 'tis only on a selfish consideration,

fideration, because I am unwilling to convince you, that all your thoughts to my advantage are without any foundation: for you will find so little vivacity in my conversation, that I believe this will be the last proof you will exact of my obedience; but whatever be the event, you may command me.

I AM afraid I send the * inclos'd too soon, to renew your grief, but not too soon, to express my gratitude and esteem.—I dare not talk on this subject.

I am, &c.



LETTER XVII.

To the same.

MADAM,

WHAT shall I say? I would attend you, I would see and hear you, tho' in a desert, if I knew where to find you, or how to attain the happiness; but alas! the whole earthly globe is between us, and the poles may as well meet. A horse or a stage-coach would be sure destruction, and shatter my frame to atoms, nor was I ever alone on the road: Yet I would refuse you nothing, and if my Lord could spare his coach——But I am afraid the project is impossible, and I still hope I may have the happiness to see you at——. But you may command me to follow you where you please; your conversation is a pleasure which will ballance every thing.

* An Elegy on the death of the Honourable Mrs. —, printed in vol. I. p. 164.

THO' I never would persuade people to forget their mortality, I hope your remembrance of it is only the spleen. I would fain believe you have many happy years to live; and may Heaven crown them with as many blessings as you can wish.

I am, &c.



LETTER XVIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOU will find, by the hurry I was in to leave *Hampstead*, how little relish I had for society, after I had left your Ladyship. Your conversation gave me a perfect disgust even to the people I most valu'd. In this impatience, I follow'd the dictates of my own ungovern'd imagination, and left the town and all its joys this morning: After this, I need make no apology for writing a short letter. If I had leisure, I should say a thousand fine things to Lady ———, (I may call them fine things in justice to myself) but I am sincerely griev'd that I lost the happiness I promis'd myself in her conversation: Yet wherever I am, she may command me for writing or drawing what is most agreeable to her.

I am, &c.

LETTER XIX.

To the same.

MADAM,

1719.

YOUR sentiments are perfectly just, that 'tis more glorious to despise the world in the midst of all its gay temptations, than to gain the victory by a cowardly flight; but I am only a mere mortal, and can't pretend to those celestial heights of virtue. However, if I had been a Roman Catholic, I might have got the reputation of a saint by this retreat; but being of a more reasonable religion, people will sooner impute my retirement to distraction than devotion. I begin to fancy I grow as humourfome as *Moliere's Misanthrope*. If I had many visits from the good gentlewomen hereabouts, I should raise the price of hartshorn, to keep me from fainting fits; for oh! I sicken, I die—or sleep and dream, and am perfectly stupify'd at their approach. I would fain reason myself into more patience and composure of mind; but this nicety of temper grows upon me, so that I shall never be fit for the society of mortals again. Your Ladyship's letters are my only entertainment, in a place where there is an absolute vacancy of common sense; and they give me a pleasure in my own way, which is unmingled with fatigue. I should blame myself for being given up to such a careless sort of tranquility, but 'tis almost necessary to my temper. I am impatient of all the conversation, which happens in low life; and in a higher rank, I have such an aversion to every thing that appears servile and dependent, that even the necessary formalities that people are obliged to pay, grow tiresome and ridiculous. Whether this proceeds from some unconquer'd pride in my heart, or from a conscious greatness of mind, I am not willing to determine; because I have an inclination to be partial to myself, and to make my faults pass for virtues.

My letter is of a proper length, and after that,

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R XX.

To the same.

YOU will find, by the * inclos'd, how my thoughts were employed in the little fit of sickness which lately confin'd me. My thoughts were on this occasion very gay and serene; but the case was only imaginary; when it comes to be real, and in a more gloomy interval, those unknown regions may have a different appearance. But as to human things, my concern for your future happiness will be the last care I shall resign. As for this world, you have as great a share of felicity, as the most beneficent temper can wish you, if wealth and grandeur can yield any real joy, and have any thing in them beyond a fleeting visionary appearance; as they have not, if you believe the poet.

*Short is the date, and narrow is the span,
Which bounds the little life of foolish man.
Gay scenes of bliss the ravish'd soul surprize,
Raise his vain hopes, and glitter in his eyes;
Of swelling titles he supinely dreams,
Vast are his projects, and refin'd his schemes:
But when his morning views of joy are past,
The melancholy ev'ning comes at last;
The tyrant death a hasty summons sends,
And all his momentary glory ends.*

Mr. DANIEL.

You will not be displeas'd, if I leave you now to your own more gay soliloquies. Adieu.

* The following letter.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R XXI.

To the Right Hon. the Countess of ———.

MADAM,

WHETHER I have weeks, or days, or but a few hours to live, Heaven only can determine; but as from some dangerous symptoms, I think my time very short, I find a great deal of pleasure in taking my leave of my friends in this solemn manner. You may be assur'd the esteem I am now expressing for you is sincere: I am past the ceremonies of the world, and therefore I cannot treat you with the least formality. My thoughts have often visited the mansions of the dead; the part I am now to perform has been so frequently acted over in my imagination, that I am not compos'd to think, that in a few days the circumstances may be real.

PEOPLE have generally a curiosity to know the thoughts of their friends, when they are on the borders of those strange and unknown regions, from whence there is no return. 'Tis indeed a serious thing to die; but virtue disarms the gloomy king of all his terrors, and brightens the prospect of futurity.

I HAVE read the *Spectators* on this subject with constant pleasure, and have been charm'd with some instances of the *Roman* fortitude; but the Christian religion arms the mind with a resolution more just and noble, while it assures us with the clearest evidence, that an immortality of happiness is the reward of a pious life.

IF you hear no more from me, my dearest friend, a long adieu, 'till we meet in the triumphant seats above.

E. ROWE.

L E T T E R

LETTER XXII.

To the same.

MADAM,

NEVER was there a more exact imitation of Mrs. ———'s style and way of thinking than the paper you inclos'd; every line appear'd like the genuine product of her unguided imagination. I hope his Lordship will never take it into his brains to mimic any of my essays, either in verse or prose. The very apprehension sinks my spirits. However, I am resolv'd to stifle all these motions of modesty, and go on thro' sense and nonsense to fill up my paper, defying any peer in the realm to imitate my style, unless his imagination takes as many shapes as *Proteus*.

How many unsuccessful attempts I shall make in translating *Pastor Fido* is yet uncertain. I condemn in one moment, what I admir'd but just before: I write five or six verses, and think them perfectly fine and harmonious, worthy of *Apollo* himself, and never to be excell'd. I read them with approbation and rapture, and do myself the highest justice; 'till on a more deliberate view, I sink from my elevations, and grow exceeding humble, to find every line dull and impertinent.—I wish the Pope would confer on me some share of his infallibility, that I might make an unerring judgment of myself; tho' I am afraid such a judgment would not raise my vanity.

I PERCEIVE I am the heroine of this epistle, except the honour I have done my Lord—in mentioning him. I continue to do myself honour by subscribing myself

Your, &c.

P. S. I

P. S. I have just receiv'd a long and agreeable letter from Mrs.——, but my integrity has no effect ; for she will retain the word, *sweetly*, to her last breath, and give up her life in the dear harmonious sound.



L E T T E R XXIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

I As sincerely thank you for wishing me so many new years, as a slave would for wishing he might long enjoy his fetters. Not but nature recoils at the gloomy passage, without the supports that the great truths of Christianity afford ; and even with these, the fatal darkness has often a thousand imaginary terrors, which are described with great emphasis in the following lines by an unknown hand.

*The soul convuls'd,
Trembles in anxious doubt, and shudd'ring stands,
Afraid to leap into the op'ning gulph,
Of future fate : 'till all the banks of clay
Fall from beneath his feet : In vain he grasps
The shatter'd reeds, that cheat his easy wish.*

*Then the gay glories of the living world
Shall cast their empty varnish, and retire
Out of his feeble view, while rising shades
Sit bow'ring on all nature's various face.
Music shall cease, and instruments of joy
Shall fail that sullen hour ; nor can the mind
Attend their sound, when fancy swims in death,*

Con.

*Confus'd and crush'd with cares ; for long shall seem
The dreary road, and melancholy dark,
That leads he knows not where.*—————

THESE grave reflections are, not perhaps, a-propos to a fine lady in the bloom of youth, and amidst all the blandishments of a court : One would think I was writing to some sober Dissenter, mortify'd to the gaudy vanities of the world : But really, Madam, my entertaining you on these subjects is the greatest compliment I can make you, and an unquestionable evidence of a friendship that forms wishes for your happiness beyond all the advantages this treacherous world can give you. The flattering dream of life will soon be over, and all beyond is boundless and immortal.

*Eternity, thou dreadful, pleasing thought !
Thro' what variety of untry'd being,
Thro' what new scenes and changes must we pass ?*

ADDISON.

HOWEVER, you may have no curiosity, at present, to try what enjoyments the invisible region can yield, and are too well pleas'd with your present station, to grow impatient to be above the stars : But if you should forget that you are mortal, and born to die, it will not be the fault of

Your, &c.

L E T T E R XXIV.

To the same.

'TIS well your Ladyship has given me a full dispensation from all forms and ceremony, and that I have your permission to be as free and licentious in that point as I will. If I was writing to any other person of your quality, 'tis likely, I should be as formal as your mantua-woman, and might tack your title to every sentence; but in addressing myself to you, I am apt to forget every thing but your real merit, and can't help talking in a manner perfectly unaffected and sincere. 'Tis quite different in my intervals of politeness. I find myself so embarrass'd with your dignity and titles, that it costs me more trouble than all the rest of my letter; it gives me a world of anxiety, where to place the word, *Ladyship*, in its proper situation, without spoiling the music and cadence of a period; which would be a great affliction to me, who am as fond (and perhaps a little more fond) of sound than of sense. However, if I should forget that I am writing to a Countess, I shall not forget a thousand other advantages which give your character a shining distinction.

YOUR Ladyship will easily excuse me for venturing to let you pass a thousand times thro' my imagination, with no other circumstance of grandeur than your own innate merit. The charming idea, un-encumber'd with the vain parade of state, entertains my thought with the beauty of virtue and unaffected goodness.

I AM afraid you will think I am turn'd Quaker, and am going to absolve myself from all human rites and ceremonies, both of a civil or religious nature; and that for the future I intend to live at large, in defiance of all rule and method. But I hope this apology will be an excuse for the future irregularities of,

Madam, Your, &c.

L E T T E R

LETTER XXV.

To the same.

I WISH with all my heart you had married a spiritual Lord instead of a temporal one ; I might then have follow'd my own inclinations, and talk'd of nothing but good things to you. I am now in a very sober disposition, and yet, in my own defence, I must appear worse than I am, for fear of passing for a fanatic with a certain Peer of *Great Britain*. But really one would not think it should be a ridiculous thing to be religious, nor that subjects of this nature should look like the effect of the spleen. If there is any conduct just and reasonable, 'tis to pursue endless happiness, and fly from unlimited misery. There can be nothing whimsical in this sort of caution ; people may as well laugh at men for endeavouring to save their lives in a shipwreck, as to think it a jest to be serious in an affair of infinitely greater consequence than mortal life, with all its narrow interests. But, as the *Italian Poet* says,

** Tanto ombra di sensi il cor oscura,
Ch'ama il momento, e l'immortal non cura.*

If this letter comes to your Ladyship in one of your moments of vivacity, you will fancy I am very much at leisure, to make these wise reflections, which I humbly conceive you are not always dispos'd to read, nor (to speak but modestly) am I always inclin'd to write. However, if I had as little charity for you as you imagine, I should be very unhappy ; while I be-

D 2

liev'd

* So much the clouds of sense obscure our thought,
A moment's priz'd, eternity's forgot.

liev'd you in the paths of vice, it would disturb all my peace in this world, and (according to my present apprehensions) be an allay to my joys in the next.

If you were ruin'd, oh! could I be blest?

Tell me, ye guardians of eternal rest.

Adieu.



L E T T E R XXVI.

To the same.

MADAM,

TH O' it has been some relief to you, it has been a great mortification to me, to keep silence so long; and I must speak or die: It would cost me a fit of sickness, not to utter my impertinence. I have been reading a discourse on happiness, and the pleasure will be lost, if I don't give your Ladyship a share in it.

** Tous les hommes desiront d'être heureux, cela est sans exception; la volonté ne fait jamais le moindre demarche, que vers cette objet. C'est la motif de toutes les actions de tous les hommes, jusqu'à ceux qui se pendent.——*

Those that live in courts, that fly to desarts; those that chuse the steep ascent to the stars, or the easy paths to the shades below, have all the same design.

I am

** All men, without exception, desire to be happy; the will never makes the least step, but towards this object: 'Tis the motive of all the actions of every man, even of those who hang themselves. Mr. PASCAL.*

I am pursuing my own happiness now, but I am afraid not yours, unless it will be any satisfaction to you to know, that I am exceedingly interested in Lord ——'s health, and hope he has got rid of his cold. I never tell lies in compliment, nor in the gaiety of my heart; you may believe me when, I assure you, I have caress'd every little clean child that I have seen of his age, with the imagination it look'd him.

I SHALL not be easy till you order Mrs. —— to let me know you are recover'd from the indisposition your Ladyship complain'd of in your last obliging letter. If you had not all the merit the sex can boast of, I should blame myself; if I am fond of any thing on earth to an excess, 'tis of you. If I could help it, you should not engage so many of my thoughts as you do; but the obligations of reason and virtue are unalterable, nor is it possible for me to express with what sincerity

I am, &c.

P. S. THIS letter is neither sense, nor grammar, nor legible; and I am undone if ever it falls into Mr. ——'s hands.



LETTER XXVII.

To the same.

MADAM,

I WISH with all my heart you were sincere, when you tell me, that one letter of mine is worth twenty of yours; I would certainly exact the debt, without any conscience or modesty.

HAVE you made a vow, never to speak one word of Lord ——— to me? You will not so much as let me know, whether he laughs or cries, sleeps or wakes; if he's airy and gay, or grave and serious; and yet you know I love him dearly, and wish him the height of happiness in the possession of his bells and rattles, and all the variety of his play-things.

MR. ——— continues his design of writing a poem on the inscription of the *Athenian* altar, *To the unknown God*. Whether the Deity is known or unknown, MR. PASCAL has made a very just reflection on this subject.

** IL n'y a que deux sortes de personnes, qu'on puisse appeller raisonnables; ou ceux qui servent Dieu de tout leur cœur, parcequ'ils le connoissent; ou ceux qui le cherchent de tout leur cœur, parcequ'ils ne le connoissent pas encore.*

I DARE not determine to which of these ranks MR. ——— belongs; the giving him the character of a saint, I am sure he would take for a very odd sort of compliment. But while I am at a loss to resolve in what class he is to be plac'd, I may with great certainty subscribe myself,

Madam, your, &c.

* There are but two sorts of persons whom we can call wise; those who serve God with all their heart, because they know him; or those who seek after God with all their heart, because they do not yet know him.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

I AM obliged to answer, since you think it worth your pains to ask me, if I have any design of seeing you in the town or country. In the beginning of winter I had some thoughts of being at *Hampstead* in *March*, but have now dismiss'd all those gay expectations. One hour's disorder, to me, is an immediate mortification to all the pleasures of life, and at present I am ill of a violent cold. This trifling indisposition darkens the fair creation, and blots every charm from the face of nature, dissolves the universe, and puts a full end to all human affairs. I neither hope nor fear, contrive nor design any thing that relates to this mortal state; but am as much at rest as the people that are sleeping in their sepulchres, and am in some doubt whether I belong to the society of the living or the dead.

As a little disorder kindles up the quickest apprehension of the important moment, when I must bid adieu to all human things, I can't but own the prospect had a solemnity in it beyond what I could conceive in the hours of health.

*Some courteous ghost, tell this great secrecy,
What 'tis you are, and we must be.*

*You warn us of approaching fate, and why
May we not know from you what 'tis to die?
But you, having shot the gulph, delight to see
Succeeding souls plunge in with like uncertainty.*

*When life's close knot, by writ from destiny,
Disease shall cut, or age untye;*

*When after some delays, some dying strife,
The soul stands shiv'ring on the ridge of life;
With what a dreadful curiosity
Does she launch out into the sea of vast eternity?*

THO' these lines are not smooth, the sense of them pleases me extremely.

I CAN send you no intelligence from wilds and deserts, but whether I am in the world, or out of it,

I am, &c.



L E T T E R XXIX.

To the same.

MADAM,

NEVER was there a more agreeable letter than your last; if you always reason so justly when you are going to see a play, the diversion will never be dangerous. Of all public entertainments, a tragedy to me would be the most agreeable and enchanting; but I shall never repent that I have so strictly kept my promise, not to see any performance of that kind; unless my high delight the opera was a breach of it, as I am a little afraid it was.

THERE is a poem in blank verse lately printed, call'd *Winter*, by Mr. Thomson; 'tis very fine, so that I am persuaded it will please the justness of your taste. I must copy this description:

*THE year yet pleasing, but declining fast,
Soft o'er the secret soul in gentle gales*

*A philosophic melancholy breathes
And bears the swelling thoughts aloft to heav'n.*

*O H ! bear me then to high-embow'ring shades,
To twilight groves, and visionary vales,
To weeping grottoes, and to hoary caves ;
Where angel forms are seen, and voices heard,
Sigh'd in low whispers, that attract the soul
From outward sense far into worlds remote.*

YOU'LL give me leave to make my compliments to Lady ———, and to Lord ———, if he is yet a reasonable creature.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R : XXX.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOU command my passions how you please, and put me in the spleen, for no other reason, but because you are in a melancholy disposition yourself. I am not apt to flatter people that they are immortal, but I am fully persuaded, that you will soon see your fears of death end in perfect health, and as much happiness as this world can give you. I hope your Ladyship will write in a more chearful strain by the next post, and I'll endeavour not to trouble you so often with my letters ; but I can't grow indifferent to the pleasure of conversing with you : However, I'll attempt it, in charity to your Ladyship.

I HAVE not forgot Lady ——'s sparkling eyes and musical voice, tho' I have met with nothing fair enough to represent her to my imagination; as I have for my Lord ——, whose place is supply'd by a little child I have met with as fine as vanity can make it, and as fair and beautiful as a cherubin.

I SEND you this copy of verses, because I was pleas'd with both the sense and sound.

* *Vanita della vita presente.*

*E fume che scende,
E posa non ha;
E mar che l'attende,
Il sempre si fa.*

*E nave che passa,
Ne torna mai piu,
Et orma non lascia,
Da dirsi, qui fu.*

*E rapido strale,
Che appena scocco,
Che il punto finale
Veloce tocca.*

E lampo

* *The vanity of human life.*

A river pouring down the mountain's side;
An ocean rolling on its rapid tide;
A ship, that swiftly driv'n before the wind,
Returns no more, nor leaves a trace behind;
A winged arrow, that the bow scarce bent,
Fast flies, and trembles in the mark it meant;

Light-

*E lampo che tesso
 Che gli occhi feri,
 Tra l'ombre nascosto
 Da gli occhi svani.
 Il sol che sovente
 Ritrova occidente,
 Dove hebbe la culla,
 E non so che, che si riduce al nulla.*

I am, &c.



LETTER XXXI.

To the same.

MADAM,

IF mortals invention was not limited, and I could write always something new and entertaining, your Ladyship should never reproach me for my silence ; but unless I say the same things again, and tire you with eternal repetitions, I must relieve myself sometimes, by
 managing

Lightning, that while it breaks with flashing blaze
 Quick on the eye, is vanish'd from the gaze ;
 A sun, that darken'd oft' at dawning light
 By sudden clouds, finds e'er his noon, his night ;
 A momentary dream, a passing thought,
 I know not what, that instant sinks to nought,
 ' Are emblems, that with semblance apt display
 ' Our earthly course : So flits our life away !

managing my stock ; for my genius is almost exhausted, and as to any thing of wit I am ready to give up the ghost : Nor is it possible in this heathenish country to supply my indigence, and get fresh recruits. This is not your Ladyship's case ; when you don't write, it is pure malice and deliberate ill-nature ; you can write the history of the present age.

THE poem of the *Horn-book* is too wicked for you ; but I am sure it would have pleas'd my Lord ———, but 'twas too profane : And to put it out of my power to give him such a criminal diversion, I sent it back to the person from whom I had it ; and indeed it was not a small piece of self-denial to me. But when I have told you, I am extremely concern'd to hear my Lord has been so ill of the gout, I'll copy some moral lines to make his Lordship satisfaction for the very unchristian wit I would not transcribe.

*What are distinction, honour, wealth and state,
The pomp of courts and triumphs of the great ;
The num'rous troops, that envy'd thrones secure,
And splendid ensigns of imperial pow'r ?
What the high palace rear'd with vast expence,
Unriwall'd art, and luxury immense,
With statues grac'd by antient Greece supply'd,
With more than Persian wealth and Tyrian pride ?*

*L E T laurel wreaths the victor's brow adorn,
Sublime thro' gazing throngs in triumph born :
Let acclamations ring around the skies,
While curling clouds of balmy incense rise :
Let spoils immense, let trophies gain'd in war,
And conquer'd kings attend his rolling car ;
If dread of death still unsubdu'd remains,
And secret o'er the vanquish'd victor reigns,*

Th'

*Tb' illustrious slave in endless thraldom bears
A heavier chain than his led captive wears.*

BLACKMORE.

I BEGIN to despair of seeing Mr. Rolli's *Milton*: I am in a very probable way to make my exit, and hear the true relation of the fall of angels from some of the actors, before his story is told.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R XXXII.

To the same.

MADAM,

I SENT your Ladyship a packet by the last post, which was not receiv'd, when you did me the honour of your last. Whenever I delay, 'tis only from a fear of being impertinent, and when I write, 'tis with a selfish design to procure an answer; for, without any compliment, your letters are the most agreeable entertainment of my life. I never read them without a generous grief, that the public does not share in the pleasure and profit they give me.

I SHALL never make a vow that will cost me so dear, as conversing no more with you; 'tis too great a height of mortification, to break a friendship with one of the most generous and agreeable persons in the world. I don't use to flatter people, but I am forc'd to speak the truth in my own justification; for I had rather half the human race should think me stupid, than have your ill opinion.

THE

THE *Italian* tragedies your Ladyship has been so obliging as to send, will be a most agreeable entertainment in some of my peaceful hours. There is something in tragedy so great, and so superior to the common way of life, that in reading, tho' I can't fancy myself a princess, I very often wish for the regal dignity, that I might speak in the sublime, and act the heroine.

MR. *Rolli* will oblige me, to keep his elegy on my death 'till a more proper season, because I am at present alive; and yet I almost wish myself dead, to be lamented in his agreeable strains; it really flatters my vanity. I intend to leave him a mourning ring with this motto, *Prepare to follow me*. He'll have patience to read so much divinity as may be comprehended in the posy of a ring, tho' the sight of a folio would fright him.

WHY are you so careless of your health, Lady ——? you don't consider the consequence of your life to the world ——. You must take pains to get such violent colds. I can't prescribe doses; but I am sure, if my wishes are pious enough to reach the skies, you will be secure of every blessing.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XXXIII.

To the same.

I AM not surpriz'd to hear that such a life as Mr. ———'s should have such a glorious conclusion; that after such a serene day, his sun should set in smiles and beauty. I can hardly forbear congratulating his friends on the happy occasion; nor is it possible to read your account, without envying such a compos'd and graceful exit. Compar'd to this, what a mean and despicable figure must an infidel make, when just about to try that *grand peut-etre*, that important *perhaps*, on which infinite happiness or misery depends?

'T WAS a more glorious prospect that calm'd the anguish of your dying friend, sooth'd his pains, and brighten'd his face with a smile, in the last agonies of nature. — But what was the next transporting scene which open'd on the just unfetter'd mind? with what triumph was it introduc'd among the great immortals? with what enlargement is the gentle spirit now wandering

*Thro' boundless realms of bliss,
Where pleasure blossoms with eternal spring;
Enjoyments made immortal by desire,
And joys that flow on joys?*

These verses are borrow'd from a tragedy of *Otway's*; you'll pardon me for perverting them to a purpose somewhat more pious than the author design'd.

I AM my Lord ———'s and Lady ———'s humble servant; but at present my Lord ——— is my hero. I am told he is the most beautiful thing under the sun: Above it I suppose he has some rivals.

Where

*Where smiling seraphs touch the golden string,
And rosy cherubs soft responses sing.*

A-PROPOS, now I am in the sublime, I'll let you know how much I wish'd to converse with you last night, while I was looking at the *Northern Streamers*. The skies seem'd all in a glorious confusion. I must own the novelty of the scene pleas'd me beyond the regular beauty of the moon and stars. When time has run his course, such a glittering disorder, perhaps, will be the prelude to the general dissolution of nature. However, I could not but form in my imagination the grandeur of that period, when the powers of heaven shall be shaken, and the wreck of the universe shall grace the triumphs of the day; and as I am exceedingly pleas'd with Dr. Young's descriptions on this subject, I am glad of an excuse to repeat them.

*Heav'n op'ning all its sacred pomp displays.
The triumph rings, arch-angels shout around,
And echoing nature lengthens out the sound.
Ten thousand trumpets now at once advance,
Now deepest silence lulls the vast expanse;
So deep the silence, and so strong the blast,
As nature dy'd, when she had groan'd her last:
Nor man nor angel moves — The Judge on high
Looks round, and with his glory fills the sky.
Not guilty fear, not fancy's self can draw
A meeting more august: Of greater awe,
Perhaps, thro' all eternity has been
By God himself nought more tremendous seen.*

*HOW vast the concourse! not in number more
The waves that break on the resounding shore,*

*The leaves that tremble in the shady grove,
 The lamps that gild the spangled vault above.
 Tribes, provinces, dominions, worlds o'erflow
 The mighty plain, and deluge all below ;
 And ev'ry age and nation pour along,
 Nimrod and Bourbon mingle in the throng :
 Adam salutes his youngest son ; no sign
 Of all those ages, that their birth disjoin.*

ONE would think this poem was not printed, or that I was willing to save you the expence of buying it. — You will read my letters for the future, on no days but *Sundays*: However, I am very modest, and your commands will easily silence

Your, &c.



LETTER XXXIV.

To the same.

MADAM,

I AM under an unhappy necessity, at present, of disobeying your Ladyship's commands. However, I am resolv'd to make a virtue of this necessity, and be as stoical as I can on the occasion. In order to this attainment, I have been reflecting on the uncertainty of human satisfactions, and placing you among the vanities beneath the sun, I have nicely ballanced the pleasure and fatigue, that attend every earthly joy, and fortify'd my mind with many a wise maxim in prose and verse.

*'Tis expectation only makes us blest,
 Enjoyment disappoints us at the best.*

But

But as Monsieur *Pascal* says, * *L'exemple ne nous instruit point ; il n'est jamais si parfaitement semblable, qu'il n'y ait quelque delicate difference ; & c'est de la que nous attendons que notre esperance ne sera deçue en cette occasion, comme en l'autre.* 'Tis certainly nothing but this imaginary difference, some delicate distinction, some untry'd circumstance, that makes us repeat the same experiment, and tire ourselves with a fairy chase 'till life comes to a period : And tho' you are at a great distance from this, 'tis time for me to grow wise, on past experience, and fairly to give up my hopes, without the fatigue of any further trial.

YOUR Ladyship will tell me (for I am resolv'd to speak for you, as well as myself) that I might have excus'd my disobedience to your commands, without this tedious moral lecture on the subject.

BUT with all these fair pretences, I am afraid I shall hardly keep the character of a reasonable creature. There is something in your conversation so elegant, so agreeable, that it looks like stupidity, to lose the opportunity of enjoying it : And I must own the hours were wing'd with pleasure that I spent at ———. But this is only humanly speaking, and with regard to the present world ; for I can't carry the compliment so far, as to say it made me more fit for the next, that I found myself mortify'd to the love of transitory things, and better prepar'd to die, while I was with you. It had quite the contrary effect ; I was never more attach'd to earthly objects, nor more unwilling to leave them. I found a perfect complacence for things below, and lost my relish for superior joys. I begun to be in love
with

* Experience does not make us wiser : Cases are never so perfectly similar, but there remains some nice difference ; and hence we expect that our hopes will not be deceived in this, as on former occasions.

with this vain world, and was very much dispos'd to take up my rest in it. Your conversation had intirely reconcil'd me to life, and given me a taste for its enjoyments; and I am hopeless of conquering my inclinations for these sublunary things, 'till you are forgot by,

Madam,

Your, &c.

P. S. If I assure my Lord ———, that one reason of my directing my letters to him, is the pleasure of writing his name; such a well-bred excuse will, I hope, obtain his Lordship's pardon.



LETTER XXXV.

To the same.

MADAM,

I MUST express myself very awkwardly, if any thing I said could bear the sense your Ladyship has given it. My words had certainly no resemblance to the intention of my thoughts, on that occasion; nor were at all agreeable to the esteem I have for such superior merit as yours. Your letters are the greatest entertainment this world gives me; and this is, perhaps, the only satisfaction I could not quietly resign. Your silence would make my life seem like a perfect blank, and as insignificant as sleep.

RELIGION ought indeed to give the mind a greatness and equality in prosperous or unhappy events; but there are some instances, in which reason and philosophy seem but empty names, when we come to try their

their force. I am afraid they would prove no more to me, if any unhappy accident should rob me of the pleasure and advantage of your letters; which have reflections in them so just, that they always give me a rational and elegant delight.

I MUST say something about going to ———: I have no arguments against it, that relate to this world; and I intend to talk no more of the next, for fear you should think me quite out of my wits; only I will tell you, that I shall be glad to see Mrs. ———, if she comes; and will shew her the church and the meeting-house, and all the rarities of this fine town.

RUMOURS of wars do not much terrify me; I have such a partial opinion of the *English*, that I can't but fancy they must still be victorious, whatever wars they engage in.

I CANNOT help writing on this paper, for I sent to *London* for larger; but they have confin'd me just to these limits, however flowing my invention should happen to be.

I am, &c.



LETTER XXXVI.

To the same.

MADAM,

IT would be impudence in me to complain, unless my own innocence could better justify my reproaches; but I am so much a greater sufferer by your silence, than your Ladyship can possibly be by mine, that my remonstrance would not be altogether unjust.

I HAVE

I HAVE not, indeed, vanity enough to think that nothing could have kept you from writing to me, but losing the use of your hands; yet I am so disinterested, that I had rather any reason should keep you silent, than the want of health; and if you will but oblige me with the favour of telling me you are alive and happy, I shall ask no more.

INDEED 'tis so long since I heard from you, that I begin to fancy you never had any but a poetical existence; that my happiness has been all a romantic scene of my own forming: Perhaps I have been only entertain'd with some pleasing dream, and amusing myself with a glittering fallacy; or else, between sleeping and waking, a fairy vision has smil'd on me, and then for ever vanish'd from my view.

YOU find I have put you into the class of dreams and shadows: If you don't write, and do yourself justice, I shall still doubt whether you are a charming reality, or only the gay production of my own imagination. I long to know whether you are something or nothing, that I may either be silent, or address you according to your dignity.

I AM glad my Lord ——— commends the *Critical History of England*; the two first volumes are very entertaining, and I am positive you would like them. If I had children or grandchildren, nephews or nieces, they should read them. I don't love history at all, I assure you; but these books are fit for all good Christians, that love their country, and wish the happiness and liberty of mankind.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XXXVII.

To the same.

MADAM,

COWLEY's essays must be entertaining to your Ladyship, if they are new to you: They will acquire new graces to me from your approbation, and when I read those essays again, it will be with double pleasure.

You are so good a judge of what is graceful and proper in the conduct of life, that you seduce me into an assent to your reasons for young people's frequenting Plays; but the same reasons, from any other person, would not have convinc'd me half so easily, after what Mr. *Law* has wrote with so much wit and piety on the subject. But in the view of the world and a public life, 'tis hardly possible to persuade one's self to be singular; and perhaps it might have an ill effect, and would dress up virtue in too rigid a figure.

I LOVE music to excess, and yet I can't help thinking it a perfect farce for reasonable creatures to make such serious quarrels for mere trifles, and seem more concern'd for the entertainments of the stage, than for the joys of paradise.

It would be vanity in me to make an excuse for my short letters; my long ones need it much more.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

I HOPE you think me dead, as I certainly ought to be in my own defence, since that would be an answerable excuse for my silence: Not but that I shall have things of greater consequence to impart to you from the immaterial world, and I am persuaded shall keep my inclinations of conversing with you unchang'd. If I retain the sense of any past pleasures, it will be the satisfaction that some of your reflections have given me; and at present I can't fancy a more agreeable entertainment, than the pleasure of informing that just and noble curiosity, that you so often express concerning a future state.

I READ Mr. *Watts's* sermons with sincere delight, but I did not commend them to you, for fear you should think me more partial to the Dissenters than I really am.

'TIS an easy transition from those sermons to Mr. *Roll's* songs, which are exceeding fine. This is a very good paraphrase on St. *Paul* to the *Corinthians*:

* *Beviam, o Dori, godiam, che il giorno
Presto e al ritorno, presto al partir ;
Di giovinezza godiamo il fiore,
Poi l'ultim' ore lasciam venir.*

* Let's drink, my *Dorus*, let's enjoy
Youth's flow'ry prime, before 'tis past ;
Let pleasure ev'ry hour employ,
Then, when it will, arrive the last !

Let

Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. 1 Cor. chap. xv. ver. 32. I have set down the verse and chapter, because Mr. *Rolli* may not know where to borrow a concordance, and I am in hopes he will read the whole chapter, it will do him no manner of harm.

I SHALL exactly obey my Lord ——— in returning the paper he has sent, in letters to your Ladyship, on condition I may indulge my talent of impertinence, and not be strictly confin'd to write common sense.

IF there are fairies; (as I am not such an infidel as to deny) they are certainly very happy beings, and possess'd of a great many privileges which unhappy mortals want: If you could convey yourself in a letter, I should receive it with great transport; for my impatience to see you is much greater and more just than yours can be. But this world has no unmingled happiness; and I'll endeavour, with as much tranquility as I can, to wait 'till death draws the curtain, and unfolds the scenes of immortal pleasure.

HERE you will dismiss me, and give me leave to subscribe myself

Your, &c.



L E T T E R XXXIX.

To the same.

THE news of the King's death has given my thoughts a very serious turn. 'Tis impossible not to be affected with such a melancholy instance of the vanity of all human joys.

Illustrious

*Illustrious shadow! where are thy designs?
 Thy glorious prospects and heroic schemes?
 Thou and thy thoughts, in one unhappy day,
 Together perish, and are seen no more.
 The promis'd blessings, the unbounded hopes
 Thy virtues gave, for ever disappear.*

THE deaths of monarchs speak a thousand solemn truths, and are the most pathetic lectures of mortality; yet still the living are insensible of these sacred *Memento's*, and go on in the same vain pursuits. Grandeur and pleasure appear in the same enchanting forms; 'till death dissolves the spell, and puts the sovereign and the slave on a level: All distinctions are then lost, but those which virtue gives; and those must be great to such as have been benefactors to mankind, and a nation's glory and protection. — But these grave reflections ought to give place to the public joy, in which I know you sincerely share, and justly deserve to be long an ornament in the court of a Queen, who is the pride and pleasure of a great and happy people.

WHAT a dialect I am got into? this is talking out of character, and wandering from my rural simplicity. The sylvan scenes are much more suited to my taste and language: Where, amidst all the tumults of the world, I find repose in an inglorious solitude, which at once indulges the indolence of my temper, and gives me leisure to reflect on the vanity of human life.

To your Ladyship's great consolation, I have but just room enough to subscribe myself

Your, &c.

L E T T E R XL.

To the same.

MADAM,

I AM very fond of politics, when writ in such soft and gentle language as yours. You have inspir'd me with a public spirit, and charm'd me so much with your description of the King and his Parliament, that I wish you were to attend her Majesty to the house on all important debates. My Lord ———'s address and eloquence could not exceed the beauty of your relation.

I AM exceedingly touch'd with these fine lines of Mr. Pitt, on the late King.

*So well he lov'd the public liberty,
His mercy set the private captive free.
Soon as our royal angel came in view,
The prisons burst, the starting hinges flew;
The dungeons open'd, and resign'd their prey
To joy, to life, to freedom, and the day:
The chains drop off, the grateful captives rear
Their hands, unmanacled, in praise and pray'r.
Had thus victorious Cæsar sought to please,
And rul'd the vanquish'd world with arts like these;
The gen'rous Brutus had not scorn'd to bend,
But sunk the rigid patriot in the friend;
And Cato reconcil'd, had ne'er disdain'd
To live a subject, where a Brunswick reign'd.*

HOWEVER libertine principles would degrade human nature, I find there is such a thing as disinterested friendship, and a sincere concern for another's happiness,
remote

remote from any hopes of personal advantage or reputation: But this is a height of benevolence, which only religion can inspire; and without that, all the specious names of honour and beneficence are mere mockery, and insolent flights of vanity. My concern for you is perhaps the stamp of Heaven on my soul, since it chiefly regards your future felicity. Whatever other change death may make on my mind, this disposition must rise to a more generous height in the regions of perfect amity and bliss. I often please myself with the thought, that departed spirits supply the place of guardian angels to their friends; that they delight to follow them in their solitary walks, watch their nightly slumbers, and make impressions on their sleeping fancy, to warn them of approaching dangers. 'Tis not unlikely, that the tempests of human passions are sometimes compos'd by the soft inspiring whispers of those propitious beings, while the seats of joy have open'd their glories in visionary scenes to their sleeping imagination.

ONE would think I were got into some golden dream, and fancy'd myself in paradise. I find some occasion to ask myself, whether I am awake or asleep, dead or alive? among the number of mortals, or departed spirits? — Whatever I am else, 'tis with great certainty that I subscribe myself

Yours, &c.

L E T T E R XLI.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOUR letter is but short, yet it discovers the anxiety of your mind. I hope my Lord ——'s illness is not dangerous, and that your Ladyship's concern is only the effect of a tender mother's affection. However it is, virtue in distress touches the mind in its softest springs; and 'tis impossible for me to express how much I sympathize with you in this affliction. But how fruitless and vain are the good wishes of mortals to one another! The most beneficent disposition cannot relieve us in the least distress; all created things disappoint our expectations, and vanish into nothing: 'Tis all demonstration then, that the world is vanity; every exigence of life proves it, without a dull chain of reasoning.

*'Tis Heav'n alone can then support the soul,
And bear it up in all its native greatness;
Dependent only on that mighty Pow'r
That fix'd the earth, that set the seas their bounds,
And bid the sun in all its glory rise.*

PEOPLE may talk at this rate very much at their ease. —While I am writing, I am sure you think in a much better manner; but 'tis a pleasure sometimes to inform people of what they knew before.

*O pursue,
Pursue, the sacred dictates of your soul,
Which lead you on to virtue! Let not danger
Nor the incumb'ring world make faint your purpose;
Assisting angels shall conduct your steps,
Bring you to bliss, and crown your end with peace.*

I am, &c.

L E T T E R

LETTER XLII.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOUR illness will defend you now from my complaints of the shortness of your letter; I am more concern'd for the cause, than for any thing I must necessarily suffer by the effect. I have plac'd too great a part of my happiness in conversing this way with your Ladyship; and am now almost convinc'd, that an absolute indifference and freedom from all the agreeable enjoyments that amuse the mind, is the nearest way to the rest it pursues: The height of friendship, as well as the excess of love, is always restless and uneasy; some sort of diffidence mingles with the most flattering imaginations we have.

I WRITE, but am never pleas'd with any circumstance in my letters, besides their sincerity; and that betrays me into a freedom and negligence in my expressions, which I am sure a temper so artless and generous as yours will excuse; while you always appear to my thoughts with every advantage that virtue or nature can give. If there are words of sacred importance, they are those of unaffected truth and friendship; and to these my soul pays a homage so religious, that no consideration could tempt me to be guilty of disguise.

YOUR Ladyship's disorder gives me many pensive moments, but I hope your next will bring me the news of your perfect recovery.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XLIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

I HAVE waited for the letter you promis'd me with great impatience; but whether you write or not, you find I am resolv'd to molest your — repose, I was going to say, but I believe I may recall that soft word for one of a more vexatious meaning, and flatter myself, that I only interrupt a sort of magnificent hurry, in which your Ladyship is engag'd.

I CAN'T persuade myself to impute your long silence to inclination; but have invented a hundred other accidents that have depriv'd me of the pleasure of your Ladyship's letters. So rooted a thing is vanity in human nature! and indeed it is one great privilege of our being, and makes us as well satisfy'd with some pleasing fiction, as the most real happiness. For my part, I am always easy, as long as I can persuade myself not to call in question my own merit; which, however imaginary, leaves me in perfect tranquility, 'till a fit of modesty raises some doubts and scruples to interrupt my felicity.

My brother begs you to accept a volume of lives compos'd by Mr. *Rowe*. I believe I am not partial in saying, there never was a better judge of the beauties of the *English* language, and of the graces of human life, than Mr. *Rowe*; and as they were publish'd at the importunity of two or three of the author's friends, who are persons of great wit and learning, I don't question they will pass for finish'd essays.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XLIV.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOUR good-nature, I am sure, would not suffer you to be silent so long, but for some real or imagin'd offence that I have given you. I cannot recollect what, because I forget my letters as soon as they are seal'd; but certainly, Lady ———, I could as soon design an injury to my own soul, as to you. I confess, I have the guilt of too many idle and unguarded words to answer for to Heaven; but I appeal to you, if ever you knew me make an envious or an ill-natur'd reflection on any person upon earth, or descend to any thing of artifice or disguise in all my conduct. In what interval of madness, what moment of folly and darkness, could I say any thing disobliging to you? I must be lunatic, and under the influence of some very fantastic planet; an error must be involuntary, that was so contrary to the disposition of my mind, and quite the reverse to my settled inclinations. If I did not know how perfectly innocent I am of the least intention to disoblige you, Madam, I should never forgive myself for acting so contrary to the rules of justice and gratitude. Besides your own merit, which, without any other motive, would secure my admiration and esteem, you have added to this a thousand obligations for the advantages of your conversation, which command my highest gratitude. These motives, I hope, would govern me, if I was a mere Pagan, and unacquainted with the sacred rules of the Christian religion.

*Were fields of light, and blest ethereal plains,
The gay conceits of visionary brains;
Were there no palms, nor starry crowns prepar'd
The glorious toil of virtue to reward:*

If there was no future recompence for virtue, nor punishment for vice, there is something in my nature that would keep me from ingratitude and breach of friendship. My esteem for you has been as sincere as my love of virtue and happiness, and will be so 'till I meet you in the happy realms of peace and perfect beneficence; 'till then, we shall never be free from error and mistakes.

*We always dream, the life of man's a dream,
In which fresh tumults agitate his breast;
'Till the kind hand of death unlocks the chain,
Which clogg'd the noble and aspiring soul,
And then we truly wake.*

THIS may perhaps be all the effect of the spleen, and a gloomy turn of thought: I wish it may; but I am so capable of every sort of folly and inadvertency, that I have reason to suspect myself rather than you. Whatever is the cause of your silence, I am, with the greatest sincerity,

Your, &c.



LETTER XLV.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOU will find, by my last letter, how much uneasiness your silence gave me: However, it will serve for an apology for all my future impertinences.

MRS. ——— has pleas'd me, by letting me know, that you made one of the best figures, for person and dress,

dress, at the coronation. But, ye vain grandeurs and fantastic amusements, how little satisfaction can you give? If you, Madam, are not happy, where are the boasts of greatness and pleasure?

Where dwells this peace, this freedom of the mind?

Where, but in shades remote from humankind;

In flow'ry vales, where nymphs and shepherds meet,

But never comes within the palace gate.

Ld. LANDSDOWN.

MR. Ramsay's *Life of Cyrus* will be perfectly entertaining to me; I have never seen it, and am impatient to read it; for it has been recommended to me by a very good judge; but I prefer your taste to every body's else, and shall read it with great partiality.

I wish your Ladyship had the privilege of being in two places at the same time, that you might enjoy your unenvy'd country delights, and shine in a court that will perhaps be the glory of the *British* history, 'till the sun shall measure days and months no more. And yet to live for the public is but glorious misery. What exalted mortal, in the last hour of life, would not resign all the advantages of greatness and power, for a few moments of leisure and obscurity? when nature in her extremest agonies

Starts at the awful prospect of the deep,

Still fears t'explore the dark and unknown way,

Still backward shrinks, and meditates delay,

Spins out the time, and lingers in debate,

Displeas'd to try an unexperienc'd state.

I AM (it being a-propos you will think)

Your, &c.

L E T T E R XLVI.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOU need not be asham'd to own you are alive; 'tis a joy to the world, and the most agreeable news your Ladyship could have told me; it heightens my enjoyment of the charming solitude thro' which Mr. *Thomson's* muse leads the thoughts with a just and reasonable delight.

THERE is a sort of noble melancholy that the mind loves to indulge; and, amidst some of the greatest gayeties, we are conscious that we came into the world for some more important end than to laugh. Not that I can pretend 'tis a crime to laugh, to you that have been so frequent a witness of my disposition to it; but certainly mirth ought to be the effect of chance and surprize, and not of deliberation and design. Farce and burlesque appear to me an indignity to human nature, when propos'd as an entertainment for reasonable and immortal beings who are in suspense and absolutely uncertain, whether their future destiny will be the extreme of happiness or misery.—It is well for you, Madam, that I am interrupted, or you would have thought me at defiance with singing and laughing.

ANY thing of your Ladyship's drawing I shall highly value, and I am extremely pleas'd that you are extending the limits of your happiness; for nothing can more sincerely amuse the mind than imitating the scenes of nature.

*When from the mingled strength of shade and light,
A new creation rises to the sight;
The blooming spring appears at your command,
And smiling nature waits upon your hand.*

'Tis no matter whether they are the stone-trees that you rally me for, or the four-footed birds, 'tis the propriety that gives the pleasure. I shall finish Lady ———'s fan very soon: I employ my pencil for her with uncommon delight.

THE character of *Selima* in the *Travels of Cyrus* charms me. I fancy, if you was in the same circumstances, you would have acted with a spirit as heroic.

I am, &c.



LETTER XLVII.

To the same.

MADAM,

THE formality of wasting paper, and beginning at the bottom of the page, is a very good expedient for a dull invention; and in no other case am I a slave to ceremony, nor in that always; for I have no great aversion to nonsense, unless when I am writing to your Ladyship; and then, tho' I have a thousand things to say, the language of mortal men does not seem expressive of my thoughts.

I HAVE been reading *Harry the fifth* in *Shakespear*, which gives the most solemn image in the world of the end of human greatness. Death seems to enter a cottage only as a gentle deliverer from the miseries of human life, but into courts and the seats of grandeur with insult and terror. To languish under a gilded canopy, to expire on soft and downy pillows, and give up the ghost in state, has a more gloomy aspect, than

at

at the call of nature to expire on a grassy turf, and resign the breathless clay back to its proper element. What does a crowd of friends or flatterers signify in that important hour to the most glorious mortal? which of his numerous attendants would stand the arrest of death, descend into the silent prison of the grave for him, or answer the summons of the supreme tribunal? You'll forgive me, Madam, for dwelling so long on this mortifying subject; if these things were mere fictions, I should be glad never to mention, nor think of them.

I HAVE finish'd a fan for Mrs. ———, with Lady ———'s picture in it, as exact as I could remember her charming face; but the wit and elegance in it no pencil can describe.

I AM, by a thousand obligations,

Yours, &c.



LETTER XLVIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

BOTH your letters found me a miserable mortal, to my great mortification; for I should be glad to commence a higher order of beings, that I might converse with your Ladyship more on a level.

I HAVE read Dr. Burnet's description of the *Millennium* with so much pleasure, that I am not surpriz'd such a subject should give you so many agreeable images, and be more entertaining to a temper like yours,
than

than either vanity or scandal; the last, the politest conversation on earth cannot make tolerable.

I HAVE read the * letters your Ladyship recommended to me, and like them, without exception, on your approbation; that motive would tempt me to wish I had writ them, if I had the least ambition of being an author. But I need not justify myself so seriously on this subject. The reading of the fourteenth, I confess, put me in mind of dear Lady _____.

LADY _____ has very much oblig'd me by the sight of those fine verses on a lady. The view of such a character gives the mind a great delight, in shewing to what an height of perfection mortals can rise; the mere possibility of such virtue pleases, because it is still human, and may be imitated.

YOUR opinion does necessarily govern me, when I know it, and I am partial or prejudic'd, not from any affected complaisance, but from a real ascendant you have over my judgment; but in this case I give my own opinion, I must own I like the *Provok'd Husband*; there seems to me to be nature, wit and good morals in it, and I can't but hope you like it. *Shakespeare's* Play I have not seen. What is become of Mr. *Rolli* and *Milton*? I hope he has found the book that was lost; 'tis pity his nation should be robb'd of such a noble translation.

I am, &c.

* *Friendship in Death.*

LETTER XLIX.

To the same.

MADAM,

IF you will not let me write to you, I am resolv'd to write to my Lord ———, and Lady ———. I know, by my own heart, you will not be angry with me in earnest ; if you take ever so much pains to be so, you have so little malignity in your temper, and must be wicked with so much difficulty, that when you make the trial, you will despair of succeeding in the attempt. There will be peace betwixt us in this world ; on my side 'tis nature, 'tis necessity,

* *Come l'acqua scende, el fuoco ———*

And in the next world nothing will break the series of an eternal amity. I shall then act in the perfection of my reason ; but while I am a mortal, I shall certainly say and do a thousand foolish things : 'Tis the privilege of human nature, and I shall insist on my claim ; my pretensions are evident, and indisputable, and I am sure you have not the conscience to desire me to be infallible, and free from mistakes both of opinion and practice. But not any of my errors has given me so much uneasiness, as speaking to you, in my last, in so artful a manner, and using any sort of disguise : It has put me more in the spleen than I thought any misfortune could have done ; and I think (if I know myself) I would not be guilty of another equivocation, if I might gain the empire of the world by it. I owe this confession to the rules of virtue and friendship. And now that my mind is at peace with itself, I find that nothing can escape the penetration of your genius. I confess it would have been a pleasure to me to know your Ladyship's opinion,
if

if you had not known the author ; but I hope the rest of the world will continue ignorant, except two or three who know my impertinent manner of thinking. However, I am pretty quiet, 'tis a harmless folly ; and as all the events and characters are fiction, if it does nobody no good, it will do them no hurt : And I believe I shall content myself for the future with copying the vanities of my imagination for your perusal ; only I must warn you to beware of reading them when you are inclin'd to sleep, for fear a mortal lethargy should be the consequence. Next time I write, I will copy something for your Ladyship, but 'tis pretty long, and not quite finish'd, and you had need be a little prepar'd for the heavy penance of reading any more of my works.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R L.

To the same.

MADAM,

I AM sincerely griev'd that you had not my letter ; to prevent your sending for me. I dare not think of a journey in my present circumstances : I have a weight on my spirits like death. My humour is not splenetic without some real cause ; and I am not fit now to enjoy my friends, nor hardly myself, which is not a common accident to my temper. As I am now, if I should see you so ill and languishing as when I was last at——, nothing on earth could support me in such a melancholy scene. But I am at present detain'd, by expecting some relations of Mr. *Rowe's*, who sent me word, they would come and see me for a day or two ; and I would always shew them the respect they merit.

I AM.

I AM glad, for your sake, that the library is got to _____; but for me, when I am capable of enjoying any thing, your conversation has charms enough to entertain

Your, &c.



LETTER LI.

To the same.

MADAM,

THE woods, and streams, and country scenes, to which you are retiring, will yield to a temper like yours more real delights than all the noisy pleasures of the town; and yet, if there was no superior happiness to be secur'd, I should think plays and opera's the height of human enjoyments. I can't be guilty of dissimulation, and pretend to an indifference for those entertainments, on any other view, but the hopes of something more noble and lasting, in exchange for present pleasures; otherwise the birds might sing, and the rivulets murmur at their leisure, for me.

WHAT shall I say to express the remorse and confusion I am under at the knowledge of your disappointment? But really you have no loss by my absence; for I am so stupid, that not even your conversation could awake me into life and sense. I have no prejudice against myself, and therefore you may believe there is no injustice in this confession. But I have still some sense of morality left, and own myself under an obligation to wait on you; if in mere charity to yourself, you will not suspend my happiness 'till next spring. As I am not yet well, if I come now, I should not let any body in the house live at ease, 'till I am sent back again. As
long

long as I have a whimſy in my head that I am mortal, I ſhall chuſe to meet death in this humble retreat; where the univerſal terror ſeems to put on a gentler aſpect, than in the view of greatneſs, and the amuſements of life: The greateſt fortitude and moſt ſerious diſpoſition is little enough to ſupport the ſoul in that important and ſolemn hour.

I TAKE all opportunities to inquire after your health, and am overjoy'd to hear that you are no longer in the leaſt danger of a conſumption, and that you are almoſt perfectly recover'd. May all the joys that virtue can give, attend you, and angels guide you in the paths to immortal bliſs.

I AM glad my Lord will ſoon return, for then all the world beſides will be inſignificant to you: 'Tis a diſtinction that is due to ſo much merit.

I am, &c.



LETTER LII.

To the ſame.

MADAM,

I AM transported at the thoughts of ſeeing your Ladyſhip here, tho' I believe it will prove but a golden dream. It would not be civil to offer you ſuch lodgings as mine; but I can command very good rooms at a private houſe; unleſs you chuſe mine, which are really not fit for you. I hope you will ſtay more than a night, for *Longleate* is but two or three little miles off, nor Mrs. —'s; and I'll ramble any where with you, on condition I may be left here, to breathe my laſt in this perfect ſolitude. Heaven grant that grand and deciſive moment

moment may look as unclouded near, as it does at a distance. O happy period!

*O celestial point,
Which ends this mortal story!*

I am, &c.



LETTER LIII.

To the same.

IF you don't come in a very little while, there will be no laurels nor holly-oaks left in the country, for my waiting-gentlewoman has ingross'd them all to adorn her chimneys: Nor will there be a handful of *balm* left in the town to make possets for the sick, if your Ladyship defers your journey much longer. I like my own house for you better than any other, and if you can bear it, I shall be perfectly happy while you are in it. 'Tis but to forget that you are the Countess of ———, and that will not rob you of one good quality; for if you liv'd in the woods, you might insist on the rights of nature, and be sovereign of the rural inhabitants, and reign unrivall'd on the plains.

YOUR promising not to plague me (as you call it) makes me half angry with you; 'tis the greatest impropriety of language you can be guilty of, besides the great injustice of such a thought: I hope you will live to repent the criminal supposition. Your company will give me unmingled joy, nor will it be possible for you to put me into the least hurry, if you will but give orders what you will have to eat and drink; for I don't expect you should live such a celestial life, as to be nourish'd with the pure ether. But I hope your Ladyship

ship will confine your luxury to the common food of mortals ; it would be an unreasonable caprice here to take it into your head to banquet like the immortals on *Nectar* and *Ambrosia*. But if your Ladyship will dispense with the want of these niceties, and content yourself with earthly viands, you will highly oblige me by writing your own bill of fare every morning : I must own, without affectation, I could as soon compose a new almanack for the year 1729, as perform such a laborious task.

I HAVE hir'd all the children in the neighbourhood neither to cry nor hollow while you are here ; but if 'tis necessary for them to utter some audible sound, and lift up their voices, I have desir'd it may be only in singing, which I hope will be as moral, tho' not so melodious an entertainment, as the *Beggar's Opera*. I know you will forgive my impertinent aversion to that performance, and the ill manners of contradicting the approbation of the public.

How happy shall I be, if you like my house ! Here are two chambers for your Ladyship, and a * chapel for Mrs. ——— ; of which she shall have the keys in her possession, and where she may retire when she will for her contemplations. Only there are no bells nor organs, but there is a cupola and arch'd windows ; and perhaps her meditations may not always require a place of more sanctity. The room I have allotted for your Ladyship has been truly consecrated by my father's devotions. One would think I told you this, that you might not fright yourself with the thoughts of ghosts and evil spirits. Perhaps the same angels may guard you there, that waited to conduct the dying saint to paradise : Never was the last part of life acted with greater fortitude. I can't help copying these fine lines sent me by Mr. Grove.

* The Meeting-house.

*Here Death I saw, not that wan, ghastly shade,
 By guilt and melancholy fancy made,
 Of aspect stern, deform'd all o'er, and blind;
 But gentle, soft, beneficent and kind.
 Down by his side a golden quiver hung,
 Full was the quiver, nor his bow unstrung.
 A silver shaft he chose ('twas tipt with love;)
 This to the man, he said, most dear to Jove.
 Then twang'd his bow, away the pointed dart
 Flew swift as thought, and pierc'd the fav'rite's heart;
 A sudden night involv'd his closing eyes,
 And the glad soul dismiss'd, sought out her kindred skies.*

*NOT distant far I saw a lonely cave,
 The passage steep and gloomy, call'd the grave;
 Dismal it seem'd, but after short descent,
 Open'd into a plain of vast extent;
 Where happy minds, from clay unfetter'd, rove,
 Verdant the fields beneath, the skies serene above;
 No summer's drought, nor wintry cold are there,
 No lazy-mists to clog the purer air.
 Broad streams of bliss from living springs supply'd,
 With smooth, majestic currents gently glide.
 Along the shore angelic forms are seen,
 And hymns divine are heard——
 YE blissful seats, &c.*

I MUST descend; how I got here I cannot tell: My excursions to the skies are always short, and somewhat unnatural; and, as you can witness, I have a great sympathy for my native element the dust, and can breathe in these gross regions without the least difficulty; and as long as I live in hopes of seeing your Ladyship, I have some peculiar engagements to the world.

IF you don't like this house, before you favour me with another visit, I will certainly go to one that I am sure you will like. But I beg you to let me know when I may expect the happiness: It would be more complaisant, perhaps, to say honour, but I am insensible to that; 'tis pleasure, that enchanting thing, which is my view, when I think of conversing with you, I would not thank the Countess of ——— for the honour of a visit; the airy sound would have no charms for me on such an occasion.

I AM making a book, instead of writing a letter. I have not room to subscribe in any form; ceremony must yield to necessity. *Finis.*



LETTER LIV.

To the same.

MADAM, Sept. 7, 1728.

I HAVE at present a set of thoughts not to be express'd in the common language of mortals; but since I am yet a stranger to the figures of celestial eloquence, I must content myself with vulgar forms, and return my thanks for your visit, in terms very inferior to the sense I have of the vast obligation.

Ineffable the rest,

And by immortal tongues alone to be express'd.

The height of good humour and sparkling wit, that appear'd in your conversation the whole time of your stay here, charm'd me beyond every thing else; but has given me such a disgust for whatever comes in my way,

that

that I am just ready to quarrel with every body I meet for not looking and speaking like you. I am grown so unreasonable as to have an aversion to human creatures, for mere impossibilities. The reflection on a pleasure past, your Ladyship will find, has a very different effect on my imagination, from what the hopes of a satisfaction to come had: I am now as splenetic to find the pleasure for ever gone, as I was gay in the view of it when future.

Mrs. ——— has left a handkerchief here, which shall be safely return'd. I wish she had left her heart, tho' it would have been an argument she had lost her wits: I am so much govern'd by my own interest, that I should rejoice at any thing which would be a motive to bring her here again.

I HAVE with many arguments prevail'd on Mrs. ——— to have some charity for *David*, tho' he was guilty of the great immorality of laughing to himself, on such a serious exigence, as the being reduc'd to toast cheese with the fire-shovel; which I find is the only crime he was ever guilty of.

WHEN shall I recover my indolence and indifference to earthly enjoyments? Really, Madam, I find it necessary to my peace and tranquility to forget you as soon as I can, which, I fear, all my pious endeavours will not be able to complete.

Be this vain world in ev'ry form forgot!

This is but a sort of imaginary triumph; for still I find myself engag'd beyond the common formality of subscribing myself

Your, &c.

LETTER LV.

To the same.

MADAM,

Sept. 16, 1728.

HOW many obligations have I to you for your last packet? without flattery these lines may be apply'd to you.

————— *Diffusing life around,
The light of glad society; and teach
Love, innocence and joy to mix again,
As in the days of Eden.*

You are Mrs. ———'s everlasting theme, she remembers every sentence: Every word that escap'd your lips is treasur'd safely in her memory, and is as authentic with her as Mr. *Dod's* sayings. She has repeated them so often to her brother and sister, that they have them by heart. She had no notion, she owns, of beauty and elegance before, but now she thinks with pleasure of what perfection human nature is capable.

I CONFESS I expected this place would have put you past redress into the spleen: I was most agreeably disappointed to find that you crown'd the too fleeting moments with wit and innocent mirth, the whole time of your stay; and I shall ever recall the happy hours with pleasure.

IN imitation of your Ladyship's benignity, that would give satisfaction to the meanest of human kind; I have rejoic'd Mrs. ——— with the intelligence of Colonel——.

I AM, by a thousand engagements,

Your, &c.

LETTER

LETTER LVI.

To the same.

MADAM,

TIS an age since I heard from you, and I begin to question whether my past happiness has been real or a dream, and if there is any such agreeable person as Lady ——— in being, or that I have only entertain'd myself with a sort of fairy vision. With you every thing else seems to vanish into a state of doubt and uncertainty. 'Tis not impossible that the world may be still inhabited by human creatures; but to me it seems a perfect solitude, and I begin to fancy myself the sole possessor of the earthly globe: Only the misfortune is, 'tis of no use to me; this snowy weather prevents me from travelling to view the extent of my vast dominions. But, dear Lady ———, if you are in any corner of the universe, let me know it; 'twill be a real joy to me, tho' I should quit half my share both of sea and land to your possession.

I am, &c.

LETTER LVII.

To the same.

MADAM,

I MUST begin with what most concerns me, which is your want of health. I have the most exquisite sense of any affliction of that kind that reaches you. You would not be confin'd to the doctor's hands for a trifle,

trifle. I have seen your temper in violent pain, and I think no person has more fortitude and calmness of mind in those occasions ; so that I shall not be perfectly easy, 'till I hear you are recover'd.

I AM much better qualify'd to write a religious diary than an epistle to a person of your Ladyship's wit and distinction. My scene of action is my own chamber, and all the use I have of human speech is talking to myself. This weather seems to confine every body to an enchanted circle, just where they are they must content themselves to stay. However, I am very well satisfy'd, as long as I hear of your welfare, and I am no further inquisitive, whether the world is asleep or awake, at rest or in agitation.

If I don't write a diary, and, with *Du Bartas*,

——— *Sing myself my civil wars within ;*

however, 'tis a practice that I can't but approve in other people : But, for myself, the daily recital of my own follies would be an insupportable mortification ; And yet a time will come, when I must stand a severer judge than my own conscience. Sometimes, for want of greater novelties, I read the *Map of Man* in this author : 'Tis a perfect picture of human nature, and the general caprice of mankind.

If I'm merry, I'm mad,

Say the severe ; if I'm sad,

The merry griggs me mopeish call.

Is't possible for any man

At once to please, do what he can,

God, himself, the world and all ?

The two first, however, are more easily pleas'd than the last ; and 'tis not of much consequence, if Heaven and conscience give their approbation, tho' the world should dissent, and make a different judgment.

You could not more oblige me, Madam, than by putting a subscription for me to Mr. *Thomson's* poems, which I hope will meet, as they deserve, great encouragement.

You may command me to copy my impertinences of any kind in prose or verse. I never conceal any of my follies from you, but when I am doubtful whether you will excuse them; and when I am afraid you cannot, I had rather half the world besides should know them: But when my vanity prevails, and makes me secure of pleasing your taste, I am impatient to send you my productions with the greatest parade and ostentation. Whatever I can hope will be to my advantage, I will never make a secret.

I HAVE sent you a perfect miscellany; and to conclude, I wish my Lord——and your Ladyship many happy new years.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R LVIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

I SHOULD pity your Ladyship, but that it looks like a sort of insolence, in the splendor of your circumstances, to imagine that you are an object of compassion. If it would not look like unpardonable vanity, I should express a world of good nature and tenderness for you, on this occasion; but I believe you will advise me, since I have a mind to cry, and am so charitably dispos'd, to find a more proper subject for my grief and commiseration. If Lady——and Lord——are in town with you, there is the less need of my pity, for they are innocent and reasonable delight.

I BEG

I BEG you to let nobody read the inclos'd but Mrs. ———. It is writ in imitation of something of this kind, which I read in manuscript, wrote by one who died very young, and with great joy and satisfaction; which probably was from the sense of having in this solemn manner renew'd the sacred engagements made for her in baptism. No motive in the world, but that sincere and tender concern I have for your happiness, could have prevail'd with me to send it; but when I consider what an advantage it has been to my own resolutions, I could not in conscience but let you see it. Oh! may you stand untterrify'd, when the pillars of the earth shall tremble, and the mountains melt before the face of the Almighty Judge. I shall not resign my concern for you, but when I give up my life, nor I think then neither. My friendship is not divided, and that makes all my hopes and fears about mortal things centre in you.

I am, &c.

A COVENANT *with* GOD.

INcomprehensible Being, *who searchest the hearts and tryest the reins of the children of men*, thou knowest my sincerity, and my thoughts are all unveil'd to thee. I am surrounded with thine immensity; thou art a present, tho' invisible witness of the solemn affair I am now about. I am now *taking hold of thy strength, that I may make peace with thee*, and entering into articles with the almighty God. These are the happy days long since predicted, *when one shall say, I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself by the name of Israel, and another shall subscribe with his hand to the Lord; and they shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Jehovah.* Therefore with the most thankful sincerity I take hold on thy covenant, and humbly accepting thy proposals, bind myself to thee by a sacred and everlasting obligation. By a free and deliberate action, I do here ratify the articles which were made for me in bap-

tism ; I religiously devote myself to thy service, and intirely submit to thy conduct. I renounce the glories and vanities of the world, and chuse thee as my happiness, my supreme felicity and everlasting portion. I make no articles with thee for any thing besides : Deny, or give me what thou wilt, I will never repine, while my principal treasure is secure. This is my deliberate, my free and sincere determination ; a determination, which, by thy grace, I will never retract.

O THOU, by whose power alone I shall be able to stand, *put thy fear in my heart, that I may never depart from thee* : Let not the world, with all its flatteries, nor death, nor hell, with all their terrors, force me to violate this sacred vow. O let me never live to abandon thee, nor draw the impious that would deny thee !

AND now let surrounding angels witness for me, that I solemnly devote all the powers and faculties of my soul to thy service ; and when I presumptuously employ any of the advantages thou hast given me to thy dishonour, let them testify against me, and let my own words condemn me.

ELIZABETH ROWE.

THUS have I subscrib'd to thy gracious proposals, and engag'd myself to be the Lord's : And now let the malice of men, and the rage of devils combine against me, I can defy all their stratagems, for God himself is become my friend.

O HAPPY day ! transporting moment ! the brightest period of my life ! Heaven with all its light smiles on thee. What glorious mortal can now excite my envy ? what scene to tempt my ambition could the whole creation display ? Let glory call me with her exalted voice ; let pleasure with a softer eloquence allure me ; the world in all its splendor appears but a trifle, while the infinite God is my portion. He is mine by as sure a title as eternal veracity can confer. The right is unquestionable,
the

the conveyance unalterable. The mountains shall be remov'd, and the hills be dissolv'd, before the everlasting obligation shall be cancell'd.



LETTER LIX.

To the same.

MADAM,

IT would be unreasonable to expect any part of your Ladyship's attention 'till the triumphs of the birth-day are past. I love shew and magnificence, I confess; but I have a much greater pleasure in hearing the just reflections of a mind form'd like yours, on those splendid tumults. In the midst of them, I fancy, you are always at leisure, and perfectly disengaged in your thoughts. If I can guess at your temper, it is free from the worst of plagues, ambition; that, attended with envy and restless suspicion, must make a court-life a state of unmingled misery. But, as you are as truly great as you can be, this must keep your mind in such a superior and easy situation.

THE story of *Lavinia* is told with a natural and becoming ease; but I read it in a very ill humour, because you had not writ a line with it. If your Ladyship had but taken the pains to put Lady _____'s and Lord _____'s name in the empty space, it would have given me some delight, and I should not have been reduc'd to fold up the paper, and read my name and place of abode on the superscription, as I did over and over, in order, first, to satisfy myself that you were alive; and secondly, that the august assembly met in parliament had not made it treason for women to spell *English*, and write in a legible character. After I

had made these rational inferences, I assum'd my native peace and tranquility again, and live in hopes of further confirmation of these great truths.

I am, &c.



LETTER LX.

To the same.

MADAM,

I HOPE this letter will find your Ladyship safely return'd to ———, and in the full enjoyment of those natural and guiltless delights that Lady ———'s wit, and Lord ———'s innocence must give you.

MILTON's morning hymn to the Creator must be a noble entertainment to a mind form'd like yours: I almost hear the harmony of it in Mrs. ———'s beautiful description of that performance.

I HAVE been reading the last chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, with many a melancholy pause on the strength and justness of those figures that describe the decay of nature; till I came to the close, where the dust return'd to the earth, and the spirit to its great original; here the scene brighten'd, and the reverse to so many gloomy memorials was all unclouded and serene. The face of nature looks now so wild and wintry, that 'tis a relief to the mind, to think itself but a passenger thro' such dreary and inhospitable regions. As Mr. Watts says,

Long nights and darkness dwell below,

With scarce a glimm'ring ray;

But the bright world to which we go,

Is everlasting day.

THE Verses to a Friend have given me a very agreeable image of a peaceful life, and as charming a scene of death.

Calm

*Calm and resign'd to some thick shade retire,
And on a grassy turf in peace expire.*

Such a death is like falling into a gentle sleep, and has nothing terrible in its approach. May the pious supplication you have inclos'd ascend like incense from an angel's hand, and bring back every blessing on your head.

It must be a joy to the public to have Prince *Frederic* here; 'tis a sort of confirmation of the nation's present happiness, and a presage of their future tranquility.

NEVER was any thing more sprightly than your last letter, only you have turn'd the raillery most unjustly on yourself; a crime I should never have forgiven in any other person in the world.

I am, &c.



LETTER LXI.

To the same.

TIS with great concern that I hear you are confin'd to your room, in the midst of so many rural delights, as the walks you are contriving must give you. Your Ladyship's description has given a very beautiful scene to my imagination, and entertain'd me with a charming sylvan retreat: I hope my Lord and you will long enjoy it. Not that I would wish your life extended to the date of an antediluvian; you have a more just opinion of mortality, and I am glad you give me an excuse to talk of these dull, or grave subjects, call them what you will, as long as you remember you were born to die, I am satisfy'd. And indeed you always express yourself on this occasion with so much good sense and true greatness of mind, that it sets your

character in the most agreeable light it can appear in. When life is sunk to the dregs, and into the last disgrace of nature, it is no great virtue to fly to death as a refuge from indignity and contempt; but in the pride of nature, and amidst the flatteries of fortune, to look calmly on the greatest of terrors, must argue a superior degree of virtue. — I would talk on, but I am in too splenetic a temper to be entertaining; and yet I never bid you adieu with so much regret: If half the serious wishes I make for you reach the skies, you will be possessor of all the blessings of this world, and the boundless pleasures of the next.

I AM, Madam, more sincerely yours than can be express'd by formally subscribing myself

Your, &c.



LETTER LXII.

To the same.

MADAM,

MY Lord —'s disgrace is a new instance of the vanity of human dependance. I could make some wise remarks on the advantage of an obscure and inferior station; if a contempt of greatness did not look like mere affectation: and it is often really so, in persons of an inferior rank; and yet 'tis in the humble cottage that peace seems to make her sacred abode.

*Not boundless pow'r, nor watchful guards that wait
In glitt'ring pomp around the palace gate,
Nor anti-chambers with attendants fill'd,
The mind's uneasy tumults ever still'd.*

I THINK

I THINK the fable, by the archbishop of *Cambray*, of the old Queen and *Petronella*, the most entertaining and moral thing of that nature I ever read; only I was angry with the country lass, for not having more wit, 'till she had made the experiment.

WITH every advantage of nature join'd to greatness, you seem almost tir'd of being a Countess. If it would not be an injustice to my Lord ———, I should certainly wish you an humble cottager, with no cares nor joys, but what your fleecy charge and country holidays afforded. I should sincerely wish such a metamorphosis, but that I must sink your hero from his dignity; and perhaps Lord ——— would not easily accommodate himself to make garlands and pastorals, being much better qualify'd to adorn a court.

THIS trifling is not sincere; for really I am in a very sober and grave disposition, and had much rather talk of the next world than of this. You are not more tir'd of visiting-days and assemblies, than I am of breathing and sleeping. I could wish myself got safe beyond the thick darkness; but there nature starts, a thousand fantastic horrors guard the gloomy passage; and yet 'tis inevitable, and must be pass'd. What ecstasy must break in upon the soul, the first moment it finds itself got secure from all those threatening terrors? when death and hell for ever vanquish'd, shall leave it in the quiet possession of immortal joys? But still the grand event is undetermin'd, and a dismal uncertainty clouds these gaudy hopes. If these bright expectations should fail, and the soul be doom'd to wander for ever on some dark unhappy shore, banish'd for infinite ages from the seats of light and joy. — This doubt often sinks my spirits, and makes me long to have the important affair decided. Your Ladyship will certainly think that I am transcribing some honest Dissenter's sermon for your edification; but I know you will pardon me when I tell you, I have no end in discovering my

own concern, but to excite yours, who are equally interested in this subject. Heaven can witness, how sincere my concern for your happiness is; the least part of it is express'd in subscribing myself

Your, &c.



LETTER LXIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

I RECEIV'D an agreeable, I can't say a long letter, from your Ladyship. Nothing can be more obliging than your invitation to M——, and you would pity me, if you could conceive how much I am distress'd, at once to express my gratitude, and unwillingness to leave this retreat. Compar'd to this, M—— is a theatre, a court, nations, and languages, the whole universe assembled together: and it seems more decent to spend the last part of life in privacy and retirement, than to intrude on the *Grand Monde* so unseasonably. I can't possibly flatter myself that time stands still, or that my sun runs backward. The world seems to be at an end to me, and the time is hastening, which will bring a pathetic evidence of the truth of that melancholy description in *Ecclesiastes*. *When the sun and the light, and the moon, and the stars shall be darkened, and the clouds return after the rain; when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and those that look out of the windows be dark; when the daughters of music shall cease, and the grasshopper shall be a burthen; when the pitcher shall be broken at the fountain, and the mourners go about the streets.*

I AM as free of my quotations, as if your Ladyship had never learnt to read, or was forbid by some popish priest to look into the Bible.

I am, &c.



LETTER LXIV.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOUR reproaches are but too just, nor dare I add to the guilt of violating my promise, that of defending myself by any false excuses; but you would easily pardon me, if you knew the secret regret that this infamous conduct gives me. It will certainly prevent me from ever making a promise in the most common actions of life. But I am the only sufferer in this, and my crime is my most severe and exquisite punishment: Your Ladyship's conversation is a pleasure that of all other human satisfactions I find the most unwillingness to resign. Unless I can have this house intirely to myself, I believe I shall remove; and if I do, I may contrive to be near enough to enjoy the advantage of your society, and secure my own freedom and retirement: But just at this instant being disorder'd with frequent pains in my head, the cold and silent dwellings of the dead are the very seasonable subject of my thoughts.

My charity is very large, and from this catholic spirit I have often canoniz'd some atheist or libertine for a great saint; but I am pleas'd to think I made an infallible judgment of Mr. ———'s merit and piety.

'Tis your Ladyship's talent to oblige people with the best grace in the world, you almost prevented my impatience for the pleasure of reading Mr *Thomson's Hymn on Solitude*, which is really fine. I fancy you have read a pamphlet call'd the *Trial of the Witnesses of our Saviour's Resurrection*; they say it was wrote by my Lord Chancellor *; whoever was the author, 'tis worthy of a man of sense and piety.

I am, &c.

H Y M N *on* S O L I T U D E.

H A I L, ever-pleasing Solitude!
 Companion of the wise, and good!
 But, from whose holy, piercing eye,
 The herd of fools, and villains fly.

O H ! how I love with thee to walk !
 And listen to thy whisper'd talk ;
 Which innocence, and truth imparts,
 And melts the most obdurate hearts.

A T H O U S A N D shapes you wear with ease,
 And still in ev'ry shape you please ;
 Now wrapt in some mysterious dream,
 A lone Philosopher you seem ;
 Now quick from hill to vale you fly,
 And now you sweep the vaulted sky,
 And Nature triumphs in your eye :

Then

* It is now known that Mrs. *Rewe* was misinform'd as to the author of this excellent performance ; for which the public universally believes itself indebted, not to the late Lord *King*, but to an eminent and learned prelate.

Then strait again you court the shade,
 And pining, hang the pensive head.
 A shepherd next, you haunt the plain,
 And warble forth your oaten strain.
 A lover now, with all the grace
 Of that sweet passion in your face!
 Then, soft-divided, you assume
 The gentle-looking HERTFORD's bloom,
 As, with her PHILOMELA, she,
 (Her PHILOMELA fond of thee)
 Amid the long withdrawing vale,
 Awakes the rival'd nightingale.
 A thousand shapes you wear with ease,
 And still in every shape you please.

THINE is th' unbounded breath of morn,
 Just as the dew-bent rose is born;
 And while meridian fervors beat,
 Thine is the woodland's dumb retreat;
 But chief, when ev'ning scenes decay,
 And the faint landskip swims away,
 Thine is the doubtful dear decline,
 And that best hour of musing thine.

DESCENDING angels bless thy train,
 The virtues of the sage, and swain;
 Plain innocence in white array'd,
 And contemplation rears the head;
 Religion, with her awful brow,
 And rapt URANIA waits on you.

OH, let me pierce thy secret cell!
 And in thy deep recesses dwell;

For ever with thy raptures fir'd,
 For ever from the world retir'd ;
 Nor by a mortal seen, save he
 A LYCIDAS, or LYCON be.



LETTER LXV.

To the same.

MADAM,

THERE are not many things capable of giving me a moment's uneasiness; but your Ladyship has still an intire ascendant over my thoughts, and can raise my hopes and fears, just as you think fit. I could not have expected more from any enjoyment in human life, than I promis'd myself from your conversation; and if the stars have any thing to do with the disappointment, I have much more reason than you to complain of their malignant influence. However, the unpleasantness of the season, and the hopes of seeing you in a more agreeable house in the spring, lessen the affliction. Nothing but the natural laziness and inactivity of my temper, will keep me from removing, for 'tis at present my real intention. Why has destiny design'd you a Duchess, and given you accomplishments to shine in a court? Had your lot confin'd you to some neighbouring plentiful farm, how happy had I been, every summer evening to have cross'd two or three flowery fields to visit you, and have found you sitting on some grassy bank, making cowslip-balls for your children, or gathering pionies in your garden, to dress up the spacious chimney in your hall! I will say no more, because the impossibility of such a happiness does really

really torment me. Adieu, ye gentle scenes of innocence and peace; I must quit the visionary bliss for greatness and titles, and address myself to the Countess of ———; who, I am afraid, will hardly pardon the strange metamorphosis I have been contriving.

*Fancies and notions we pursue,
That ne'er had being but in thought;
And, like the Grecian artist, woo
The image we ourselves have wrought.*

PRIOR.

I CANNOT but truly sympathize with your Ladyship in your anxiety for Lord ———. I hope he will escape, by the protection of Heaven, this worst of human distempers *.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R LXVI.

To the same.

MADAM,

I FIND, by a too guilty experience, that people in low life take an insolent sort of pleasure in levelling their superiors; but I must own, that since I have divested you of your titles and equipage, you are grown more intimate and familiar to my imagination, and my affection for you is heighten'd by conversing upon an equality

* The Small-pox.

equality with you. I have visited your cleanly farm without any ceremony, and wander'd in the green pastures stock'd with lowing herds and bleating flocks. Only your domestics are not quite so elegant as I could wish. Instead of such nice romantic damsels as *Almeida*, I meet harmless, unthinking, round-fac'd lasses; and for powder'd beaux in shining liveries, mimicking opera airs and songs, I meet *Colin* and *Lubberkin*, with russet-coats and sun-burnt faces, whistling some aukward tune, or roaring out a country ballad with voices as harsh as their fellow animals which bellow on the mountains. However, to make you amends for this, every thing else is as elegant as the abode of some sylvan goddess; joy and festivity surround you, and nature pours out all her blessings for you. But to leave these visionary scenes, I can't but in reality admire the agreeable innocence and regularity of your wishes: The height of your station has not perverted your taste for that guiltless happiness, which nature in her perfection seems form'd to enjoy.

I CANNOT be unconcern'd for Lord ———, while the small-pox is so near you; all my hopes are plac'd in that heavenly guard, whom you have made your confidence.

Mrs. ——— is now in town, where I hope your Ladyship will find her always entertaining and easy. Envy is not my favourite vice; if it were, I should be as soon jealous of your favour, as of any thing on earth; but instead of that, I am pleas'd to find merit recommend itself to your esteem in every appearance: And I really think Mrs. ———'s good qualities will bear the strictest and most nice examination; and a long acquaintance with her, instead of discovering faults, reveals new virtues. If I remove, it will be seven or eight miles nearer you, to convince you that I am not going to conceal myself from you. I had a thousand

times

times rather enjoy your conversation in my own private retreat, than see you in such a crowded station as your own.

MAY the smiles of Heaven brighten your passage thro' the gloomy tracts of life, and direct you in the unerring paths to immortal joy.

I am, &c.



LETTER LXVII.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOU have given me a very agreeable image of the gardens at *Kensington*; but your Ladyship must have a perfect command of your temper, to turn your thoughts to the planetary regions, amidst those charming retreats, and all the soft amusements of a court; where to my great satisfaction, I find you can think as seriously, as if you were in a desert. I wish your Ladyship would transcribe some of your midnight reflections; when

*A thousand lamps of golden light
Hung high in vaulted azure charm the sight.*

DR. WATTS.

I HAVE guilt enough, Heaven knows, to humble me, but I may safely assert that I have hardly ever in my life broke a promise deliberately; and I beg your Ladyship would now prevent my guilt, for if you do not insist on the engagement, I am still free and innocent.

If I was twenty years younger, and could share in the amusements of society with a good grace, I would attend you 'till you were inclin'd in charity to yourself to dismiss me; but you would not advise me to ramble 'till I was blind enough to knock my head against every thing that stood in my way, nor 'till I was so deaf as not to hear without a speaking-trumpet. Your Ladyship, I am sure, has too sincere a value for the decency of my character, to advise me to intrude on the world 'till I carry

In my face

*Memento mori to each public place;
While rival undertakers hover round,
And with his spade the sexton marks the ground.*

Dr. YOUNG.

I AM a hundred years older than when I saw you last.

*Not num'rous are our joys, when life is new,
And yearly some are falling of the few;
But when we conquer life's meridian stage,
And downward tend into the vale of age,
They drop apace; by nature some decay,
And some the blasts of fortune sweep away;
'Till naked quite of happiness, aloud
We call for death, and shelter in a shroud.*

Dr. YOUNG.

I am, &c.

LETTER LXVIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

IT would be a great happiness to be either insensible, or independent on human events; to be too stupid, or too wise, to be concern'd at the bright, or gloomy accidents of life. If I had but sagacity enough to be satisfy'd, that whether you are sick or in health, the stars will keep on their round, nature observe its harmony, and the sun bring back the day, it might restore the composure of my thoughts; but in the height of my concern, I have not wit enough to reason so well as this. Sometimes I endeavour to persuade myself that you are in heaven; but in my fits of infidelity, that does not give me the least consolation, and I am so wicked as to wish you groveling on the earth among wretched mortals again. At present I know not where to find, nor where to place your Ladyship, to my full satisfaction, and perhaps less to your own: For I am not sure you will thank me for sending you to the skies so early, and before you find any reason to be weary of this world.

THE Duchess of ———'s dying at ———, seem'd to be a melancholy circumstance, which seldom happens to people in a low rank; to be in the hurry of a journey, amidst the agonies of death, had something dismal in it. I have not time to transcribe the sermon I told Mrs. ——— I would send your Ladyship, and you may not be quite so impatient for it, as you would be for a new tragedy.

FOR fear you should not have spirits enough to read a long, and which is worse, a dull letter, I will subscribe

Your, &c.

LETTER

LETTER LXIX.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOUR Ladyship's letter has freed me from the most racking suspense, and given an alacrity to my mind, like ease after pain; and how agreeable an alteration that is, you are very sensible, by your recovery from your late tormenting disorder. But while my Lord continues ill, I find you will not enjoy the blessing of your own ease; nor is it possible to blame a concern so just and graceful: And yet the height of human pity cannot give a moment's relief in pain, that most intolerable of mortal evils. But tho' the power of an empire could not exempt the greatest of mankind from this one calamity, I may with a very good grace wish your Ladyship many happy new years, as you are the delight and admiration of the public. If I thank you for your good wishes of this sort, 'tis in mere ceremony; for I should intreat you to reverse your prayers, if I were prepar'd for that important moment, that must decide the grand uncertainty, whether I shall be miserable or happy for ever. Could that doubt be fully resolv'd on this side the fatal darkness and gloomy passage of death; were all the prospect bright and unclouded thro' the horrid vale;

*I then should close my weary eyes in peace,
And stretch compos'd upon my dusty bed.*

*O Death! thy silent and refreshing shade
Would yield a long, an unmolested rest
From all the fruitless toils and vanity
That dwell below the sun.*

I am, &c.

LETTER LXX.

To the same.

MADAM,

THE new distemper is at present very fatal in this town, and my own servant is ill in it; which has put me into a more serious temper than usual. I would fain meet death, whenever it comes, without any hurry and surprize. The greatest pleasure I take, while I am in this temper, is writing a solemn farewell to my friends. I have been looking over one letter, I kept by me, to your Ladyship, and am now going to burn it, and write another, as I expect that I shall quit the toil of life long before you.

*And may some gentle spirit have command,
To waft my soul to the celestial land;
Where I fair Delia's coming will attend,
Till freed from earth she thither shall ascend.*

I am not at all in the spleen, but it is not reasonable for me to expect an exemption from a general disorder. As to this world, I have as much to do as will employ me two or three hours, and then I am even with all mankind, in point of human justice. I have no restitution to make, nor the least known injury to repair; and I verily believe there is not an ill-gotten penny descended to me from my humble but pious ancestors. I lay a much greater stress on this part of religion, that regards mankind, than I do on any height of devotion, as necessary as I think it to reconcile the mind to death.

You will pardon me, Madam, the familiarity I have us'd, in running into a subject so particularly my own concern; it was not in the least my design, but there is a pleasure in talking freely to one in whom I so infinitely confide.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R LXXI.

To the same.

MADAM,

MR. Rolli's *Milton* is a charming amusement for the quiet and solitary hours I enjoy. My Lord — has highly oblig'd me, by giving me an entertainment so perfectly agreeable. I would not decide with the vanity of a critic; but to me there appears all *Milton's* beauty and spirit, with the most exact translation in the world.

YOUR Ladyship's last letter charm'd me so much, that I got every word of it in my memory. I hope the powers of darkness will never be able, with all their policy, to draw you to their party, for then their allurements will be resistless. I would rather think your arguments opposite to their interest, and that you would persuade me from an insignificant life, that has nothing in view but a private selfish happiness. Mr. Thomson has furnish'd me with some of the most agreeable lines in the world to express my thoughts.

*I want to be alone, to find some shade,
Some solitary gloom; there to shake off
This weight of life, this tumult of mankind;
And there to listen to the gentle voice,
The sigh of peace. —*

'Tis a noble * tragedy; I can't help preferring it to Mr. Addison's *Cato*. The language and sentiments have all a peculiar grandeur. The following lines give me a very good opinion of the author.

*Ye mysterious pow'rs,
Whose ways are ever gracious, ever just,
As ye think wisest, best, dispose of me.
But whether thro' your gloomy depths I wander,
Or on your mountains walk, give me the calm,
The steady, smiling soul, where wisdom sheds
Eternal wisdom, and eternal joy.*

In reading this, a sort of divine contentment spreads on the mind; I seem to want nothing, but to be wiser and better; of which you will think there is evident necessity.

I AM beyond expression oblig'd to your Ladyship for the offer of the pretty peaceful apartment, so suited to my taste; and your neighbourhood is what I should prefer to all earthly enjoyments: But still — *I want to be alone*, — tho' not for such meditations as *Massinissa's*. The limits of life are very short, and I seem to have nothing to do but to take a decent farewell of human things. As for the common pretence people have for haunting public places as long as they can stand, that of doing good; I can't in my conscience make any such pretence, nor can I be positive 'tis ever my design. I should think it a very romantic attempt, to reform the world. 'Tis hardly possible in the decline of life to act an applauded and exemplary part: Virtue then, tho' ever so real and unaffected, looks like necessity, rather than choice: People seem reduc'd to goodness, and to fly to religion as a retreat.

I WANT to be interrupted, like *Sancho*, I can't reason long without some convenient pause and intermission; which will be at present as seasonable for your Ladyship, as for

Your, &c.

L E T T E R LXXII.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOU have reason to be thankful for this little interval of quiet and leisure, which I have suffer'd you to enjoy amidst your country amusements; but as

Sooner or later all things have an end,

the period of my silence, and your Ladyship's tranquility is expir'd; and if I should not molest you, the preparations for a birth-night will soon require your attention to the pomps and vanities of the world; unless you can bring yourself to be as compos'd and devout amidst the magnificence and gallantry of a drawing-room, as Dr. *Watts*, in his height of charity, imagines. However, he has done your Ladyship but justice, in admiring your conduct, while you can move and shine

On this enchanted spot of treach'rous ground,

Nor give your virtue, nor your fame a wound.

BUT I have a concern of a different nature that lies at my heart for you. This enlighten'd age is blest with so many *Beau* apostles and polite missionaries, that I am in some pain for fear you should be converted to Heathenism. 'Tis so modish a thing to turn Pagan, that we have need of all the fortitude Christianity can inspire, to own a sinking, tho' in reality, a glorious cause. May the heavenly powers preserve you from this grand apostasy! I have a concern so sincere and ardent for your immortal interest, that I cannot command my tears, while I think it possible you should be perverted from the paths of sacred truth. — I must make a visit to your farm to divert the gloom of my imagination; and never were the scenes of innocence and peace more charmingly describ'd than in your letter.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R

LETTER LXXIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOUR last letter, tho' too short, gave me an unspeakable satisfaction, at a time when very few things in the world could have given me the least pleasure: For I have had some short fits of this universal distemper; and want of health, without a chain of reasoning, is a clear demonstration of the vanity of mortal enjoyments. The only circumstance in your Ladyship's letter that gave me some uneasiness, was your illness; but as you seem'd to think it a slight disorder, I hope you are by this time in perfect health.

I AM overjoy'd to find I had no reason to suspect you of infidelity. You would forgive my impertinent suspicions, if I could make you sensible, how sincere my concern for your happiness is: Indeed it is not equal to the importance of the event, in which immortality is concern'd; nor is it possible, in this gloomy state of things, to have apprehensions suitable to the grandeur of the subject.

I AM reading ———'s history with great satisfaction. I know your Ladyship will pity my stupidity, that can read a history in folio. I had once the same sprightly taste, to despise every thing that had the air of plain unartful truth and probability; but now it is much more agreeable to me than the gayest fiction.

MRS. ——— is charm'd with Lady ——— and Lord ———; yet how uncertain are human expectations! Her telling of the death of Lady ———'s little boy gave me some uneasy thoughts.

'Tis well for you that I am not quite easy; if I was, you might not be so soon free from the impertinence of

Your, &c.



LETTER LXXIV.

To the same.

MADAM,

I CANNOT excuse, tho' I still find a great propensity to indulge myself in what you call a criminal tranquillity; but I am so fond of your good opinion, that I should be content to have my vices pass for virtues with you, and would fain have you believe this aversion to ceremony and dependance, rather proceeds from greatness of mind, than from pride: Nor am I less inclin'd to impose on you than on myself; for whom I seldom want partiality, and never fail in the exercise of the most extensive charity. And yet I have too much sincerity to persuade you, that 'tis rather my duty than my happiness that I consult by this retreat from the public; and if I should confess, that an absolute freedom from all the formalities and customs of the world is a part of my felicity, you would think I have a very odd notion of happiness, and will certainly advise me to regulate such a licentious and irregular disposition; and not to fancy, that to wake or sleep, to sit or stand, to laugh or cry, at my own leisure, is a point of liberty worth struggling for.

I know not what orderly and governable inclinations some people have acquir'd; but to me it seems a vast privilege, to be rustic or polite, wise or impertinent, without

without being censur'd, or accountable to my fellow-mortals. But this may perhaps be soothing myself in a guilty indolence; for people are not sent into the world as idle spectators, to wake and sleep, and stare at the vain shew for a few years, and then to make their exit.

You find, Madam, I have not the vanity to pretend to a devout retirement, nor affect any recluse notions of religion; my thoughts of that are just the reverse, and all easy and sociable.

I HAVE form'd many a visionary plan of coming nearer to ———, and appearing, and retiring, just as your Ladyship's commands, or my own caprice should direct; but something or other has still frustrated my attempts, while I have been most sincere in my designs, and entertain'd myself with a thousand agreeable scenes, in the view of such an happiness. By my deliberation, you will think I fancy myself just coming into the world; since I can find leisure to form schemes of distant felicity, and pursue them as slowly, as if I had an hundred years lease of life before me. 'Tis just the contrary; my negligence arises from the narrow limits in which human life appears to my view; which seems so confin'd, that 'tis hardly worth while for mortals to change the scene and vary the action.

Swift as the sun revolves the day,

We hasten to the dead.

Dr. WATTS.

I HAVE been reading the life of the Countess of Warwick with great pleasure, and the more because some beautiful parts of her character resembled yours. May the last part of your life (however distant) be as glorious! Tho' it is not very modish to pray, perhaps it may not be altogether unnecessary; and in asking blessings for you, my devotions are most unaffected and sincere.

I am, &c.

G 2

LETTER

L E T T E R LXXV.

To the same.

MADAM,

THIS wintry weather has spoil'd all my projects, and confin'd all my views of happiness to the solitary limits of a clean room and a clear fire. I find I must suspend the hopes of seeing your Ladyship to some distant and unknown futurity; which, whether ever it will arrive, is beyond the ken of mortals. If it should not, 'tis but having a little patience, and we shall meet, I hope, where the height of virtuous friendship and every other joy will be complete: 'Till then I could quietly sit down in some verdant shade, and wait the summons to happier worlds: Heaven bless you! if I never see you in this again. But the pleasure of conversing with you, is not a satisfaction I can resign with half the coolness and moderation that you have represented. Your Ladyship has indeed spoke for me with much more wit and eloquence than I could ever command; but if I had made a speech for myself, it would have been very different, and much more agreeable to the real sentiments of my heart.

You are not more delighted with a country farm, than I am with an old parsonage-house, in a little village, where I was lately a few hours; so situated to my content, that I seem'd to want nothing but your reflections and society, to form a complete happiness. A large garden and orchard, half modern and half antiquated, long codling-hedges, old-fashion'd bowers, elms and apple-trees, green-squares and maple-bushes, all in the most gay and agreeable confusion imaginable: These scenes infinitely charm'd me; and, with the unaffected piety and politeness of the family, gave me an exceeding favourable opinion of their principles, and a sort of suspicion of my own. — If I had made the tour of
France,

France, and seen the gardens of *Versailles*, it would have been excusable to have been so communicative of my satisfactions ; but to trouble your Ladyship with the description of old monasteries and box-hedges, is somewhat impertinent I confess.

YOUR Ladyship will, I hope, be half asleep, when you read my letter, for, at the second reading, I perceive some inconsistencies in it ; but writing nonsense is not a very humbling circumstance to me, because it is the effect of necessity rather than choice : All I can do in this case is to cast myself on the charity of my gentle and candid reader, which has been my constant refuge in many distresses of this nature.

I HAVE been entertain'd with some very beautiful remarks on the expression us'd in the sacred writings, of the Patriarchs dying and being gathered to their people. It has reconcil'd me to assemblies, by giving me such a grand idea of that august and sparkling assembly, to which the spirits of the just have been gather'd since the first ages of the world. As little as I love crowds, I am exceedingly pleas'd with the thoughts of that numberless concourse of the great immortals, join'd together to pass an endless duration, in an immense variety of joy and complete felicity.

*While they rowe
Forever thro' new regions of delight ;
Where pleasure leads her everlasting train,
Beauty and youth, in all the rosy bloom
Of charms immortal, and unfading life.*

THE muse descends, and in dull prose

I am, &c.

LETTER LXXVI.

To the same.

MADAM,

IT gives me a sincere pleasure to hear that your Ladyship got safe to ———, and found Lady ——— well, and Lord ——— recovering. I stay'd 'till the middle of the next week, after you left the *Bath*, in which time I spent a few hours agreeably with my Lady ———; who brings back to my remembrance one of the most amiable characters I ever knew, and which gratitude will never suffer me to forget.

I SHOULD be miserable if my mind was always in that impertinent situation, that I find it, amidst the noise and amusements of this world; a train of inconsistent images, a succession of chimera's run thro' my imagination, without the least propriety or order. I could compare my head to nothing but the case of a *Raree-show*; and if the figures had been visible, I might have entertain'd the mob with the ridiculous pageantry. How superior to those vanities are the satisfactions of reason and virtue! If religion is a cheat, let me be still deceiv'd; let me indulge the gay delusion, and recreate my soul with the transporting expectation. Stand forth, ye glorious phantoms, and entertain my attention in all your visionary splendors! Let me be well deceiv'd, and at least be happy 'till death shall put a period to the pleasing dream. Were the Christian heaven as fabulous as the poets *Elysium*, I would meet the height of human censure and contempt, rather than be undeceiv'd and cur'd of the charming delirium. But the present pleasures of virtue are to me a full demonstration how bright its future reward must be.

YOUR Ladyship has highly oblig'd me, by wishing me among the angels; the moment I am fit for that society,
let

let me resign my breath, and join the illustrious assembly. But if the prayers of departed saints can prevail, you shall not stay long behind me: Consider, there are silver trumpets as well as golden harps to entertain you.

I am, &c.



LETTER LXXVII.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOU will think me very blind to my own follies, if I tell your Ladyship, that I have an aversion to be impertinent and troublesome, and that I never am so without great caution and diffidence of myself; but 'tis an experienc'd truth, and I feel a secret anxiety, least this letter should molest you in some moments of tranquility, when you would fain be at rest from any interruption. And this is the third vexation I have given you, since I heard from you; but Mrs. ———'s account of your illness has given me many uneasy thoughts.

No advantages can secure from disease and death; the last account I heard of Lady Scudamore was very melancholy; but she must be happy, be the event what it will. I am in great pain for Lord ——— since I heard the small-pox is so very mortal, and I wish this letter may find you in the country.

IN my dull way, I have been diverting myself with copying one of the prints of *Albanus*; but 'tis no matter what I have been doing, nor do I suppose you are much concern'd to know. However, I long to hear what you

have been doing or thinking; for I begin to fear you have only an imaginary being, and are but some sparkling idea, which in the flight of a poetical fancy I have been delighted with.

I HAD writ so far in my letter, when your Ladyship's came with the sad tidings of Lady Scudamore's death: All that allays the gloomy event, is the certainty of her happiness. But to the public there is no reparation for such a loss (when you are excepted.) But 'tis not long before her virtuous friends will again enjoy her society; while her favour'd lot has call'd her first to the seats of peace and full felicity.

I SHOULD be extremely griev'd, if I thought your Ladyship's retirement from public places was the effect of want of health or spirits: 'Tis a pleasure to me to believe, that it is only owing to good sense, and a just opinion of human life.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R LXXVIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

TIS a pleasure to me, to hear your Ladyship complain of a hurry, and to find you are not satisfy'd with that thoughtless unmeaning sort of happiness. Leisure and freedom are certainly the principal ingredients of human felicity; and while you want these, I should certainly bestow my compassion on you, if it would not look like insolence, within the obscure limits of a solitary chamber, to pity the Countess of _____. But your Ladyship will excuse me, when I own, it is only

only with regard to the next world, that I see any disadvantage in your station ; and yet every difficulty gives a splendor to your example, and makes the victory more glorious.

THE verses following were writ by a man of good sense, who since he wrote them, is gone to make the important discovery in the invisible world.

*Hark ! my gay friend, that solemn toll
Speaks the departure of a soul ;
'Tis gone——that's all we know ; but where,
Or how th' unbody'd soul does fare,*

*In that mysterious world, God knows,
And God alone, to whom it goes ;
To whom departed souls return,
To know their doom, to shine, or burn.*

*Ah ! by what glimm'ring light we view
The unknown world we're going to ?
Heav'n has lock'd out the future age,
And planted darkness round the stage.*

*This hour, perhaps, our friend is well,
Death-struck the next, cries out, Farewel,
I die ! And then, for ought we see,
Ceases at once to breathe and be.*

*Then launch'd from life's ambiguous shore,
Ingulph'd in death appears no more ;
T' emerge where unseen ghosts repair,
In distant worlds, we know not where.*

*Spirits fly swift ; perhaps 'tis gone
A thousand leagues beyond the sun,*

*Or twice ten thousand more twice told ;
E'er the forsaken clay is cold.*

*And yet who knows, the friends we lov'd,
(They may not be so far remov'd)
Only the veil of flesh between,
May oft glide by us, tho' unseen ?*

*While we (their loss lamenting) say,
They're out of bearing, far away ;
Guardians to us, perhaps, they're near,
Conceal'd in vehicles of air.*

I am, &c.



L E T T E R LXXIX.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOU have just reason to think my silence a greater blessing than my letters. I am afraid this is really the case, and that your Ladyship rejoices at this interval of tranquility I have given you. However, as I have in so abstract and disinterested a manner consulted your quiet, after this long pause, I hope you will indulge me in pursuing my own happiness; which, however selfish the motive, I must own is my present design. I am impatient to know whether you are in a humour for this world, or the next. 'Tis not envy, that makes me wish this may not be your resting-place, but pure christian charity. If you were exempt from those clouds that sometimes cast a shadow upon all human bliss, such a serene state might be fatal to your future hope.

NOTHING.

NOTHING but mere dullness and want of invention has kept me from writing another epistle to Lady——. There is no conquering insuperable difficulties, nor striving against nature and necessity.

LET me beg the favour of your Ladyship to write in a little time. My practice is no rule for you; if I give myself a full dispensation from the rules and forms of this world, 'tis because I think I am going to another sett of beings, and must shortly practice customs and manners different from the ceremonies of mortals: But youth and sprightly years are still before you, and the world will not yet give you an absolution from its rules and precepts. However, you may command Mrs. —— to let me know you are alive, if she has not made a vow never to write to me again. The hearing from you will be a sincere pleasure to

Your, &c.



LETTER LXXX.

To the same.

MADAM,

I HOPE, tho' your health has some little interruptions, your life will long be a joy to your friends, and a peculiar blessing to your own family.

IF I should be so unhappy, as not to return just such an answer as you would have me, 'tis because I can't help it. Human actions are not always voluntary; however we boast of choice and freedom, some invisible powers put obstacles in our way, and prevent the most promising designs. I find it by experience, and am now under

under the influence of a sort of fatal necessity, which makes it absolutely impossible for me to wait on your Ladyship at this time: But I sincerely believe I shall be in *London*, some time after *Christmas*; and then, if you have any leisure moments, or I any sprightly ones, next to Heaven, they shall be at your command; which will be much better than teizing you with my company from the rising to the setting sun,

From morn to noon, from noon to dewy night.

If this appointment fails, 'tis my present real design to wait on you in the spring; but, at this time, I hope you will excuse me, because it will be a prodigious inconveniency, if not absolutely impossible for me to come now.

You have all the sweetness of temper that ever any human being could boast, and that gives me the assurance, even at this juncture, to beg of your Ladyship to send me something or other that I have not seen. I can't tell whether you have seen these verses, which were sent me by the author, *Mr. Birch*; I fancy they will please you.

You have a better opinion of me than I deserve: I have not wrote any pious meditations of late. The warmth of devotion, perhaps, as well as other passions, declines with life; but I hope the calm, the reasonable and solid part of religion still will be improv'd. Whatever changes there are in my mind, my friendship for you is an equal and immortal flame, and will outlive the ceremony of subscribing myself

Your, &c.

On the DEATH of a beloved Wife.

Written by her husband on her coffin.

WHILE pining anguish, wild despair,
Increase my pangs, prolong my care;
Depriv'd of all my soul held dear,
Inchanting joy and love sincere;
While round the gloomy scene's display'd,
And death still deepens ev'ry shade;
Sad, silent, dark, the pomp of woe!
Shall sorrow's eye forbear to flow?
Flow still, ye tears! ye sighs, complain!
——But sighs and tears alike are vain!

SEE there all pale and dead she lies!
Forever flow, my streaming eyes!
Fly, *Hymen*, with extinguish'd fires!
Fly, nuptial blifs, and chaste desires!
Cleora's fled, the loveliest mind;
Faith, sweetness, wit, together join'd.
——Dwelt faith, and wit, and sweetness here?
O view the change, and drop a tear!
Once in these eyes each grace was seen,
And love and mildness shone serene:
Once soft persuasion tun'd her tongue,
As truth sincere, and sweet as song:
Once this cold hand could touch the lyre,
And ev'ry tender thought inspire:
Now sinking to its parent clay,
All chang'd, the body seems to say,
Thus life, a shadow, fleets away!

O WHISPER still, thou voice divine !
Thine be the lore, attention mine.
And while this awful object lies
Expos'd before my weeping eyes,
Teach me, some genius from on high,
Like her to live, like her to die ;
To emulate the paths she trod,
All humane, gen'rous, great and good !
Like her the rage of death to charm,
And ev'ry sting of pain disarm :
Rise as the rose, a spotless soul,
Who aim'd at joys beyond the pole ;
And raptur'd on the verge of day,
Smil'd to behold the shining way.

BUT, hark ! the sadly-solemn bell
Sullenly sounds my last farewell.
Lo ! round the corse the plaintive throng
Slow-moving, silent stalk along.
The torch that lends its mournful light,
The mystic pray'r, the fun'ral rite,
The weeping friend, th' expecting ground,
The silent horror all around,
Have tempted Sorrows from her cave,
And now she hovers o'er the grave ;
Now sinks our hearts, impels our eyes,
And bids a gen'ral groan arise ;
Exclaims that man was doom'd to mourn,
And sits in pomp to guard the urn.

'Tis done ! — O ever dear, adieu !
Each tender name is lost in you.

Adieu.

Adieu, thou once kind, lovely fair !
 Soft spring of joy, relief from care !
 O rest ! may Love, with ev'ry Grace,
 And ev'ry Virtue, guard the place !
 While me receives the lonely bed,
 Sad, prostrate, silent as the dead !
 Restless I press the well-known place,
 And vainly seek the dear embrace ;
 While slow and drear the minutes roll,
 And anguish racks my inmost soul.
 — But see ! what heav'nly pow'r serene
 Darts gently thro' the gloomy scene ?
 'Tis she ! ingliding from above ;
 The same her form, the same her love.

WEEP'ST thou, my dearest ? weep no more !
 Tho' transient scenes of life are o'er :
 New worlds now open to my view ;
 Bliss, knowledge, virtue, boundless, true ;
 Where souls with social raptures glow,
 While sin and vengeance reign below.
 Hence nightly I, thy guardian pow'r,
 Forever conscious of the hour
 That join'd our hearts, descend to keep
 My dearest charge ; to watch thy sleep,
 Hint softer dreams ; to chase away
 Black error's mist, and bright display
 The form of virtue to thy sight ;
 Dart o'er thy soul a stronger light ;
 In reason's voice to whisper still ;
 To purer bliss direct thy will ;

A beamy cloud around you throw,
And viewless guide you as you go.
Lo ! (few short moments roll'd between) —
I present change the darksome scene ;
Dispel the awful shades of death,
And gently ease your parting breath ;
Glad hail to you the realms above,
Dear, blest, immortal as our love !
Thus while we leave thy lifeless clay,
To some bright orb thy soul convey,
Where virtue, truth, and pleasure join,
And raptur'd say — This seat be thine !
Here knowledge great as souls can know,
Shall purge the errors learn'd below ;
Enlarge thy pow'rs, improve thy sight,
And shew thee truth in native light.
See there yon happy shades employ
Their hours in bliss and social joy ;
High-rais'd on virtue's eagle wing,
The patriots act, the poets sing ;
With purer fires the lovers glow,
Than youth or sense inspire below.
Here join we then the kindred race,
That springs to meet our soft embrace ;
Or in some sweet sequester'd grove
Mix flame with flame, and love with love.
Hence wing'd with thought excursive fly,
From orb to orb, and range the sky,
View wisdom, pow'r, and goodness shine
Thro' nature's frame ; their source divine.
—— O call these scenes to thy relief,
Bright future scenes ! and calm thy grief :.

Live happy ; nourish still the love,
That blest on earth, and joins our souls above.

SHE spake, she smil'd, she soar'd away ;
While comfort glanc'd a healing ray.

Aug. 3, 1729.



L E T T E R LXXXI.

To the same.

MADAM,

THIS is not my farewell-letter ; nor can you hope for that, 'till I take my leave of the sun and stars. My friendship will follow you 'till then, nor expire with that period ; 'tis commenc'd for immortality, and is abstract from all human motives or interest. Nor really, Lady ———, am I so much to blame as I appear ; for I had not your last letter, 'till after mine was gone by the post. It was best that it happen'd so ; for I was taken so violently ill, two or three days after, in the new sort of distemper, that you would not have thought I had a week to live, and I am hardly now recover'd. You can't be angry, without doing violence to the benignity of your own temper. Consider, if I have a boast, a joy on earth, 'tis your good opinion. I hope I have not been guilty of a breach of promise, in not waiting on you, because I am so careful never to promise any thing absolutely. Let me beg you to write, if 'tis nothing but to insult me with my ill deserts, and your own superior merit ; which shall be most readily acknowledg'd by

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

LETTER LXXXII.

To the same.

MADAM,

Nov. 26, 1731.

'TIS your ease rather than my own, that I have consulted in this long silence: But in spite of moral speculations, I find a great part of my happiness depends on your Ladyship's welfare and good opinion; and when I don't hear from you, I grow anxious for you, or diffident of myself.

YOUR description of the Duke of *Lorain* is too beautiful to be read with mere insensibility: However, 'tis only in some moments of vanity, that grandeur and equipage charm me; for if I know myself, I should certainly chuse that peaceful retir'd life, which Heaven in great indulgence has determin'd for me. But I am not lost in such a dead calm, as to be indifferent to all the shining characters in the *Grand Monde*; for it would extremely oblige me, if your Ladyship would sometimes mention your acquaintance with Lady——— and Lord———; of whose merit I should certainly be sensible, if they had neither titles nor quality, and liv'd at the next country farm.

I SINCERELY intended to be at *Hampstead*, this winter; but now the fatigue appears nearer, I find myself as likely to make a pilgrimage to *Loretto*, as take a journey to *London*.

'Tis too late, or I would write to Mrs———; her last letter gives me real uneasiness. I must have been guilty of some fantastical preciseness, that she misunderstands; for my soul stands clear of malignity, or design'd injury. But this is the world of errors and mistakes; which will be all set at rights in the regions of purer illumination.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER LXXXIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

WHETHER I speak or am silent, my sentiments for you are full of good-will and benignity; of this Heaven is a constant witness, who sees my secret and most retir'd wishes for your happiness. The friendship such merit as yours inspires, must be superior to common forms and ceremony, and govern'd only by its own noble dictates. I must confess, that I sometimes accuse myself of a too negligent sincerity; but this your Ladyship may easily excuse, when you consider I have made you personate a rural nymph so long, that I have almost forgot you are the much happier Countess of _____. That advantage is indeed your Ladyship's, as well as Lord _____'s; for whom I am sincerely afflicted to hear he has had so severe a fit of the gout: But if any thing could ease such anguish, it must be the tender and unaffected humanity your actions express. But I must confess, when I am so selfish, so interested, (as I sometimes am) to trouble myself for nobody's happiness but my own, I then wish your lot had been in the humble tranquility of a lower station: Because among the human race there is no person whom I am half so much inclin'd to treat with freedom and intimacy; nor who could entertain my thoughts with pleasures more rational and sublime, if fate had not plac'd you at such a painful distance.—— I suppose, after this confession, you will repine at your stars, for making you a Lady, instead of a gentle shepherdess, and placing a coronet, rather than a flowery wreath on your head.

YOUR Ladyship has oblig'd me by naming Lady _____ and Lord _____; tho' you leave me only to con-

conjecture the little graces and elegancies, that must attend their society. It will be great clemency in your Ladyship to write very soon to

Your, &c.



LETTER LXXXIV.

To the same.

MADAM,

Apr. 14, 1732.

YOUR affliction touches my very soul. I find it easy to conceive the anguish you endure for Lord ———'s and Lady ———'s illness, at a time when your own disorders require so great a share of patience. But as Heaven has favour'd you with every circumstance of human happiness, perhaps, this allay may be necessary to fix your thoughts on a superior felicity, and give you a full evidence of the vanity of human things. Your Ladyship's situation in life, especially in an interval of unmolested prosperity, gives me as much anxiety, as if I saw you standing on some dangerous precipice; and (if I don't myself miss the road to heaven) it delights me to think how sincerely I shall congratulate you on your safe arrival thither, thro' so many snares and insinuating temptations. I shall certainly have a peculiar affection for the celestial guardian that attends you, and is your invisible protector in a thousand unseen dangers.

Mrs. ——— is still in great danger, tho' her physician has, with very good success, been, in the hands of Heaven, hitherto the means of preventing the return of her distemper; but the dizziness and weight she feels in her head make her afraid to walk in the streets, for
fear

fear of falling. Tho' she has still a great deal of natural vivacity, a sudden death is a circumstance that keeps her in a perpetual anxiety; as she apprehends herself the next moment reeling into her grave, and just ready to hear her eternal fate decided. This does not however make her sullen or gloomy, but fills her mind with great and important ideas; and I must own, I never found her conversation more agreeable. I know you will excuse this long account of a person so inconsiderable in this world; but in the next, I believe she will find a splendid distinction.

I RETURN you a thousand thanks for the *Minute Philosopher*, which tho' I have not seen, I know I shall like; your approbation being the greatest authority with

Your, &c.



LETTER LXXXV.

To the same.

MADAM,

April 22, 1732.

YOU have given me a real and extensive satisfaction, by the * book you sent me. I read it with a secret gratitude to the author, as being a benefactor to mankind, in endeavouring to secure their highest interest: Nothing can be writ with more argument and vivacity, nor more seasonably, in this juncture of apostasy from the Christian religion.

* *Alciphron, or the Minute Philosopher.*

THE following lines are, I fear, only a poetical flight; for I dare not ask myself whether I should be really so disinterested.

*O be thy int'rest safe, thy cause secure?
 Whatever clouds hang on my future hours,
 I pass them all — thy sacred will be done!
 I am of no importance to myself;
 I could resign my being, sink again
 To my first nothing, could thy glory rise,
 When I am blotted from the rank of being.*

IT is a sensible pleasure to me, to hear that Lord ——— and Lady ——— have got rid of their coughs; but it is a satisfaction of a higher nature, to find the *Grand Monde* has no charms for your Ladyship.

I HOPE you will find ——— a retreat as charming as Mr. ———'s description has made *Ickworth-Park*.

*While books and walks divide the vacant time,
 Unconscious all of folly or of crime;
 While you each morn respire the balmy air,
 And breathe it out again in praise and pray'r.*

This is certainly going to heaven with a very good grace, and shewing what virtue is, in her native elegance and beauty; 'tis making the paths of philosophic life more smooth and delightful than all the popular ways of vice and luxury.

FOR want of public amusements, I must entertain your Ladyship with my own private satisfactions; and communicate the pleasure I have had in reading the last scene of the life of Dr. *Rivet*, who was tutor to one of the princes of the house of *Orange*. No scene of earthly grandeur (as much as I admire trumpets and kettle-

kettle-drums) ever excited my envy, like the triumph and fortitude, with which the pious man met the universal terror. Thus let me quit the shore, and launch out into immortal joy! It will be more seasonable to say my prayers another time: But you will pardon this excursion from

Your, &c.



LETTER LXXXVI.

To the same.

MADAM,

May 27. 1732.

YOUR Ladyship is the last person on earth to whom I would put myself in a ridiculous light; and yet 'tis a misfortune to which I am often reduc'd, in spite of all my solicitude to avoid it. However I have some excuse for my obstinate attachment to obscurity and solitude, from your own charming description of it. You have furnish'd my imagination with a glorious scene of sylvan delights at ———; but I am content with the range of two or three flowery fields hedg'd round with hawthorn, that are near me; of which I peaceably take possession, when I would indulge a serious thought, and place myself in a situation superior to earthly fears or hopes. In these serene moments your company would be as agreeable as the visit of an angel. Whatsoever stupidity you reproach me with, I am never so abstract, as to think of you with indifference: In my most ambitious excursions, when I am got beyond the period of all human things, I promise myself the most refin'd pleasure, in a happy and unlimited duration; when you will be improv'd in every excellency, and I incapable of any folly that may lessen your esteem. You
already

already speak the language of immortality in what you sent me. May all those blessings that inspire your soul with such exalted gratitude, be continu'd to you!

If you knew what joy every letter of yours gives me, you would not call it molesting me, tho' you did me the favour to send me a billet by every winged wanderer that makes its airy tour this way. In a post or two I will return you my thanks, at large, for the obligation of your last letters; for at present I have only just time for the ceremony of subscribing myself

Your, &c.



LETTER LXXXVII.

To the same.

MADAM,

Sept. 6. 1732.

I WAS in hopes every post would bring me a letter, but at last my gay expectations vanish'd into trackless darkness, and gave me inquietudes of another nature; since you are not exempt from the ills of vulgar mortals, and 'tis possible for your head to ache, tho' distinguished with a coronet: However, as it is not my business to prescribe to you, or confine you to your chamber, when you are in perfect health; I will dismiss that gloomy reason for your silence, and rather think it voluntary.

I AM satisfy'd you must approve of my delay, in not coming at this juncture, when the small-pox rages so much here: If my fears are ever so whimsical, if there is but a shadow in them, there is still some merit in
this

this caution, since 'tis on Lord ———'s account. You cannot think me so stupid, so insensible to all that is charming and elegant in life, as not to have a taste for such conversation as yours. There is not among the human race a mind so form'd — a temper — a turn of thought and manner of expression, that pleases me like yours. I talk more to Mrs. ——— than to any body else, because she admires, and is capable of entering into the elegancies of your character. And yet, after all, there is a strange sort of fatality, that puts some unconquerable obstacle or other in the way of my inclination and happiness: However, I can't but hope for one short interval of that felicity, on this side the sun, in some future happy period.

I am, &c.



LETTER LXXXVIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

Octob. 8. 1732.

I HAVE been putting your letters and papers in order. When I die, I design to leave them in ———'s hands, as a trust sacred to friendship and virtue: Those papers and my pictures being the only things I find an inclination to carry with me. You cannot imagine how the settling this, and some other little affairs in order, soothes and pleases my imagination. No person ever took more satisfaction in preparing for a journey of pleasure, than I do in setting things in a just decorum for that last and grand removal. But I am still sensible no forecast can prevent many natural fears, and accidental exigencies that may oppress the soul in that important action. 'Tis impossible to know, 'till the ex-

periment is try'd, what pains of body or anxiety of mind, may add horror to the fatal darkness. But since it must be pass'd, 'tis of the utmost consequence to endeavour to prevent a surprize, by growing familiar with death and all its attendant terrors. The gloomy monarch has been met not only with composure and decency, but with a sort of pious insult and triumph: Of which a late instance of one that I knew dwells on my memory, who in the bloom of life, and the affluence of fortune, left the world with the same graceful ease, that an angel, who had just finish'd his message, would spread his wings, and return to his native skies. I will not talk of dying any longer, for fear you should reproach me for not putting it in practice.

I am, &c.



LETTER LXXXIX.

To the same.

Novemb. 11. 1732.

WHEN will the drudgery of life be o'er,
And we be landed on a happier shore?

Your Ladyship's part of life has been too short to plead the privilege of being dismiss'd so soon, however impatient you seem to advance in your race of life, and put yourself forward; while youth and nature forbid the impossible attempt. But, I believe, there are few of your fair contemporaries will find themselves inclin'd to keep you company, so that your expedition will not be prevented by a crowd. And yet to bid adieu to the charms of youth, and resign the bloom of beauty with
such

such an inimitable grace as the verses in one of your Ladyship's letters express, is more to be envy'd than the gayest parade of life. However, this is a period only to be desir'd by a virtuous mind, as an introduction to immortal youth and felicity.

*Come, gentle age! to me thou dost appear
No cruel object of regret or fear;
Thy stealing step I unreluctant see,
Nor would avoid, or wish to fly from thee.*

THE * books in vindication of revelation I have read with a real pleasure, and will return them to you with the first safe opportunity. Your Ladyship's approbation is the very point of my ambition; and if the † *Inchanted Forest*, or any thing of mine pleases a taste so just as yours, I am intirely satisfy'd with myself.

I AM perfectly sensible of the obligation I have to you for your four last agreeable letters; and if I was in the *Grand Monde*, that scene of action, and you was buried alive in a cavern, and had nothing to say but what occur'd in your own thoughts, I should certainly have the charity to write twenty letters for one. 'Tis a long time since I read a news-paper, but I am just going to get the account of the birth-night, that I may make some conjecture how your Ladyship spent the happy time.

YOUR Ladyship is too much an infidel, to believe stories of apparitions, and would laugh at me for such relations; but if I could have got a description of some
H 2 lights,

* *Revelation examin'd with Candor*, 2 vol.

† A translation from *Tasso*, published in the third part of *Letters Moral and Entertaining*.

lights, that were seen in the sky, from some intelligent mortal, I would have sent it: But some tell me 'twas like one thing, and some another, so that I cannot at present tell what it was like: But 'tis a certain truth, that I am

Your, &c.



LETTER XC.

To the same.

MADAM,

Jan. 1. 173².

YOUR letters are favours so free and unmerited, that I cannot complain of the intermission, with any manner of decency; tho' I suffer so much by it, that I should certainly have interrupted your peace, if I had known precisely whither to direct for you. For yours, in a literal sense, is the journey of life; a pilgrimage, without a metaphor. As the weather is now milder, I hope your Ladyship will be freed from your cold, and your confinement to a chamber, at your charming hermitage. Your Ladyship's description of it, and the park at *Richmond*, are beyond the charms of poetry. I shall never forget that there are such agreeable persons in being, as Lady ——— and Lord ———; tho' your Ladyship seems resolv'd never to mention them. You will be pleas'd, when I tell you, that instead of writing moral essays, I have employ'd my leisure, this winter, in the harmless amusement of drawing landscapes; and sometimes have dar'd the inclemency of the sky, by walking in the fields this frosty weather: The prospect exactly answer'd your comparison of a landscape cut in white paper.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XCI.

To the same.

MADAM,

Jan. 24. 173 $\frac{2}{3}$.

YOUR letters would never be dull to me, tho' the words were put together as accidentally as *Epicurus's* atoms; I am persuaded, even then, they would appear with some peculiar beauty and spirit.

I AM easily persuaded your Ladyship would have pass'd your time agreeably in Lady ———'s conversation, if it had been in a place less charming than you have describ'd your hermitage. 'Tis a pleasure to me to hear that my Lord ——— has so perfectly recover'd his health; both as it regards your Ladyship's happiness, and is so great a blessing to the public. Nature would have instructed Lady ——— in the art of drawing without a master. It is a sort of hereditary qualification in your family. It delights me to hear that Lord ——— resembles Mr. ——— either in person or temper; for never could human nature possess more perfection. I have been reading Mr. *Fielding's* new comedy, *The Modern Husband*; and can't help thinking it a good play, if nature, wit, and morality can make it so.

YOUR Ladyship gives me a secret pleasure, while you flatter me with the thoughts of seeing you at ———; and yet I check those gay expectations, and number them with those visionary delights, with which people please and delude themselves to the last period of life. It suits my circumstances better to reflect that the night is near;

*The fatal night of death, when I shall sleep
Unactive in the damp and gloomy grave.*

*The period hastens on, that puts an end
To ev'ry vain design: My trial comes,
The solemn hour draws near, that must decide
My everlasting state; and no appeal
From that tribunal e'er will be allow'd.*

I WISH your confinement, and the hurry of the town, may not increase your cold. I can't help having the greatest concern for your health; tho' your Ladyship almost forbids me to wish you many happy new-years. Indeed there is so small a share of happiness falls to the lot of the most favour'd mortals, that I have some scruple of wishing any person a long life; unless they are such, as I think, may justly despair of mending their circumstances in the life to come.

YOUR Ladyship has made Mrs. ——— happy, by naming her: We are both mightily pleas'd with an Amazon's head which I have drawn, which we fancy is exactly your side-face; there is as much beauty in the air and feature, (if my pencil has not fail'd in copying the original) as ever sparkled in a human face.

I am, &c.



LETTER XCII.

To the same.

MADAM,

Feb. 2. 173².

YOU have reason to rejoice, that my paper promises but a short letter, for my thoughts are at this instant in a very gloomy situation. I can't flatter myself that this chagrin rises merely from a disinterested concern

concern for the public calamity, unless my friends were all immortal and secure from general danger. Your Ladyship's last letter gave me the satisfaction to know that you are recovering from this fatal disorder; and I hope your next will inform me, that those of your family on whom your welfare depends, are all past danger.

I AM sincerely oblig'd to Mrs. —, for the newspapers. 'Tis a pleasure to me sometimes to know the posture of human affairs. It would be giving yourself unnecessary trouble, to doubt whether you should transcribe a thing from a public paper, for fear of molesting me with the agitations of the busy world; as long as the arches of the sky are standing, and the pillars of the earth fix'd, I am at rest: And I hope, if they were broken, I should look with serenity on the glorious confusion, and welcome the happy period, that will bring a brighter scene in view.

THE new fever rages here, and is very fatal; and yet I can't help wishing you in the country, for the air must be less contagious here than in *London*. Wherever you are, may the peculiar protection of Heaven guard you from *the arrow that flies by day, and the pestilence that walks in darkness*. Quoting scripture would have a fanatical air to one of less piety; but as you have join'd that, to the greatest elegance of taste, and the most refin'd manners, I shall escape the ridicule I should expect from an inferior character to your Ladyship's.

To my great joy I have just receiv'd a letter from you, which brings me the welcome news, that you are all well. I have had a short fit of the fever, to reproach my ingratitude to Heaven, for a series of uninterrupted ease, with which my days have been bless'd. However, I am still confin'd to a tenement of clay; my spirit cannot yet get releas'd from its mortal fetters; I

Speak it with a sort of confusion. Whenever the welcome period comes, I shall injoin Mrs. ——— to let you know it; but I shall never intrude on your solitude: The scandal of what people call walking, would induce me to keep myself invisible, whatever pleasure I took in attending your retirements.

YOUR good wishes will add to my brother's happiness; and it will be no detriment to yours, if I subscribe myself

Your, &c.



LETTER XCIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

March 26. 1733.

YOU have conquer'd the difficulties of an art, which will be a certain amusement in some of the moments of chagrin, which no state of life is exempted from. This thought pleases me as much as the charming picture you have favour'd me with, which has been the delight of my eyes ever since I receiv'd it.

MAY Heaven restore you again to a state of perfect health, and crown your days with every circumstance of felicity. I hope you will not be negligent of yourself; for a relapse into this new disorder seems to be more dangerous to people than the first seizure. This cold weather increases my concern for you.

SUCH a character as yours, gives me too great an opinion of human nature, to suffer me ever to prefer solitude for itself; and I am so far from designing to seclude

seclude myself from society, in the blissful bowers, that 'tis a pleasure to me to think of meeting countless numbers of gentle spirits, as elegant and refin'd as yours. And yet, according to my present apprehension, I shall find something peculiarly agreeable in your society; from which I promise myself a most lasting and sincere delight, when we meet in that splendid concourse, which shall come from every tribe and language on earth, to form the numerous assembly.

If ever you attempt copying your own picture, let me beg to have it, and I will never ask another; that will be the highest obligation you can lay on

Your, &c.



LETTER XCIV.

To the same.

MADAM,

April 1733.

IT is a sort of mortification to me, to believe that I need make no apology to your Ladyship for my silence; but this is certainly the case, and it would be mere vanity in me to make excuses, for what you will rather thank than reproach me. I need not inform you, that the spring is now in its bloom, that daisies and cowslips adorn the verdant field.

While birds on branches perch'd, or on the wing,

At nature's joyful restoration sing;

How sweet the morn! how gentle is the night!

How calm the ev'ning! and the noon how bright!

THE news of popular tumults and discontents turns my envy of splendor and superiority into serious compassion, to find that no heights of merit can be a defence from public censure, and the ingratitude of a happy, tho' uneasy people.

It would be cruelty to myself, to renounce the only joy I have, which is your conversation; but that, like all other earthly pleasures, is no sooner enjoy'd, but 'tis past; and 'tis no more than an agreeable dream, a pleasing speculation, which, without the least fatigue, fancy can entertain herself with.—You will think I have reason'd all human things into mere shadows.

'Tis but expanding thought, and life is nothing.

*Ages and generations pass away,
And with resistless force, like waves o'er waves,
Roll down th' irrevocable stream of time,
Into eternity's unbounded depths.*

YOUR Ladyship has highly oblig'd me by the expectation of another picture of your drawing. I have promis'd Mrs. ——— that of *Cornelia* when I die; with which she seems so overjoy'd, that I'm afraid she will wish the time shorten'd: However, it will not be long.

*To thee, O Death, my fleeting moments tend,
In thee the burricane of life must end.
Tho' murm'ring waters from the ocean crowd,
From thee by nature no return's allow'd:
For tho' the seas have leave to ebb and flow,
The streams of life must always forward go.*

A THOUSAND blessings attend you! be the celestial spirits your protection in every known or unseen danger!

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R XCV.

To the same.

MADAM,

May 9. 1733.

YOUR Ladyship's description of the hermitage entertains my fancy with the most enchanting prospect on earth. If I did not expect a more pleasurable situation, after a few short months or hours are past, I should envy you the happiness of your charming retreat; which might be, and certainly is, a haunt for angels, when you are there.

*The guard of Providence is sure about you,
And you were born to bless an impious age.*

It gives me a sincere pleasure to hear Lady ——— is got into your Ladyship's way of thinking; with that advantage, how sparkling will her character be! while the spirit and gracefulness of her blooming years set off every virtue. Be it easy, or severe, it must attract love and imitation, and strike the senses as well as the soul; the heavenly flame will mingle with the lustre of her eyes, and the beneficent disposition make itself visible by a thousand nameless graces.

'Tis the effect of a perfect humanity, that your Ladyship will give me leave to flatter myself, that my silence is not a thing wholly indifferent to you: If it was, it will always be an act of charity in you to conceal it; for the value I set on your good opinion, will, perhaps, be the last attachment, from which my mind will be disengag'd in this world.

WHENEVER I think of seeing your Ladyship once more, the first thought sets a scene of pleasure in my view; but it is soon damp'd, when I consider what a venerable

venerable figure people make, at my time of life, among persons of your gayer years and temper. My good Lady ———, and Mrs. ———, with several others of my grave contemporaries, rise in a visionary farce before me; and by their reverend examples confirm my resolution of concealing the concluding follies of life in a decent retirement. Nothing appears more dismal to me, than being a dead weight, a sort of solemn incumbrance to society. This is, perhaps, being too nice, and refining beyond what a state of mortality will permit.

In meer compassion to your Ladyship I leave off, and subscribe

Your, &c.



LETTER XCVI.

To the same.

MADAM,

June 2, 1733.

YOU have made me very happy with another picture of your drawing, which I have but just receiv'd. I am glad you don't take a fancy to old hermits and philosophers; your devotees are young and handsome, and please with *Coytel's* airs, who I confess is my present favorite painter: nor do I wonder that his designs are entertaining to Lady ———'s elegant taste and genius.

NOTHING can be so sparkling to my imagination as your hermitage. You have brought back the sylvan scenes to their primitive grandeur, and a farm house appears as polite as a palace. Instead of an air of low life,

life, your cows and sheep give it the appearance of the patriarchal wealth and plenty; and Lady ———, I presume, guards her fleecy charge, in as genteel a habit as any poetical shepherdes that ever grac'd the stage.

I wish you may like the * *Dialogue on Devotion*; for your approbation would be more to the young author, than that of half the universe besides.

I am, &c.



LETTER XCVII.

To the same.

MADAM,

IT would be mere vanity in me, to make an apology for leaving you so soon; without any affectation, or giving myself airs of modesty, I sincerely think my absence never requires an excuse: However, if your Ladyship knew what inquietude and regret I felt, when I disobey'd you, it would atone for my obstinacy. I cannot express the remorse it gave me: Not that I repent my journey to ———; for it has certainly furnish'd me with some agreeable images both of beauty and virtue, which perhaps are not to be found in any other place, or at least not so suited to my taste.

I SHOULD have begun my *Japan* table as soon as I came home, if *Les Pensées de Pascal* had not accidentally come in my way, and given my thoughts a situation superior to all earthly things. In reading that book I
lose

lose every care, and grow independent on all below the skies : The trifling hopes and fears of human life vanish before a more important interest, while I yield to the evidence of these just reflections.

* *IL ne faut pas avoir l'ame fort élevée, pour comprendre, qu'il n'y a point icy de satisfaction veritable & solide, que tous nos plaisirs ne sont que vanité, que nos maux sont infinis, & qu'enfin la mort, qui nos menace a chaque instant, nous doit mettre en peu d'annees dans un etat eternel de bonheur ou malheur. L'immortalité de l'ame est une chose qui nous importe si fort, & qui nous touche si profondement, qu'il faut avoir perdu tout sentiment, pour etre dans l'indifference de sçavoir ce qui en est. Toutes nos pensees & toutes nos actions doivent prendre des routes si differentes, selon qu'il y aura des biens eternel a esperer ou non, qu'il est impossible de faire une demarche, qu'en le reglant par la vue de ce point, qui doit etre notre dernier objet.*

I AM, by a thousand unmerited obligations,

Your, &c.

* It needs no very elevated understanding, to perceive that there is here no true and solid satisfaction, that all our pleasures are but vanity, that our evils are more than can be numbred ; and, in fine, that death, which threatens us every moment, must in a few years fix us in an eternal state of happiness, or misery. The immortality of the soul is of such importance, and interests us so deeply, that one must have lost all feeling, to be indifferent about it. All our thoughts and all our actions ought to take paths so different, according as there are eternal goods to be hoped for, or not ; that it is impossible to tread one step aright, without regulating it by a regard to this, which ought to be our sole object.

L E T T E R XCVIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

IT will do you no real harm, for me to begin at the top of the paper ; tho' my head is at present something vacant, and I find myself at a much greater loss what to say, than 'tis possible your Ladyship can be, after having said so many fine things on every agreeable subject in nature. It would be more just in you, to complain for want of new worlds, and some unseen novelties, than for want of invention. When the celestial arch, the groves and flowery lawns, have been describ'd, mortal eloquence is exhausted. Indeed the follies of mankind would afford a wide and various scene ; but charity would draw a veil of darkness there, and chuse to be for ever silent, rather than expatiate on that melancholy theme.

I AM taking a great deal of pains to convince your Ladyship that it is not for want of wit, but variety, that my invention is cramp'd ; the narrow creation is my complaint. In a more modest disposition, I may be content with the limits of the universe, and think the world wide enough ; but at present it seems as diminutive as the painted globe in Queen *Elizabeth's* hand, or the soap-bubbles my Lord ——— blows into the air. The poetic boasts

*Of thoughts which wander thro' infinity,**And soar above the skies,*

yield but little consolation : After all their ethereal excursions, we have got but very dark intelligence from the invisible world ; and are so far from finding our ideas enlarg'd, that we are forc'd to degrade the brightest order of Angels into human figures. Perhaps your
Lady-

Ladyship's sparkling imagination does not dress them up in broad-cloth and beaver-hats; but even velvet coats, and diamond buttons, would make but a tawdry figure above the Stars. However, there is no remedy for these inconsistencies, till the curtain falls, and discovers the glories of immortality in their native splendor.

ONE would imagine, when the universe makes such a despicable figure in my view, that even stars and garters, crowns and sceptres, seem transform'd into toys; one would think, in such a superior situation, I should have no attachment left for a *Japan* screen; but, I must own, I long to see it.

I AM afraid your Ladyship will allow me but little of your attention, 'till after the birth-day; however, I hope you will give Mrs. ——— leave to let me know you are well, which will be the greatest satisfaction to

Your, &c.



LETTER XCIX.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOUR Ladyship would not thank me, I am persuaded, if I wish'd you a thousand happy new years in this world, crown'd with youth and constant tranquility; but when I wish you an immortality of happiness in the next, Heaven can witness the sincerity of my soul.

I FANCY the Prince of *Orange's* story would make a very beautiful novel, if the scene was laid in some of the

the fragrant eastern isles, blest with perpetual spring. A great many fine characters might be introduc'd under poetical names. The spirit and open temper of the Prince of *Wales*, with his generous concern for the illustrious stranger, would make a very shining figure. I have a great inclination, in some ambitious moments, to attempt it in imitation of *Telemachus*, and address it to Lord——.

THE following verses are the essay of a very young muse, Mr. *Rowe's* nephew, that your Ladyship has seen at *Hampstead*, who has a promising genius for his early years.

On the Nuptials of the PRINCE and PRINCESS of ORANGE.

By Mr. NICOLAS MUNCKLEY.

FIR'D with the fame of *Brunswick's* royal race,
Adorn'd with ev'ry virtue, ev'ry grace;
Young *Orange* long aspir'd to be ally'd,
Where only he could find an equal bride.
Should haughty *France*, or *Austria*, to his arms
Proffer, in all the pride of youthful charms
A blooming princess, blest with ev'ry grace,
Pride of the *Bourbon*, or *Cæsarean* race:
(And well might haughty *France*, or *Austria* own
Their monarch honour'd by so great a son)
Vain were the offer; *Orange* ne'er would join
A tyrant's race, with *William's* patriot line:
Their race, whose impious arms mankind enslave,
With his, whose godlike glory was to save.

IMMORTAL *William* ! thy victorious hand
 From the proud *Gaul* rescu'd thy native land ;
 Nor to one nation were thy arms confin'd,
 Thou hero sent by Heav'n to save mankind !
Albion oppress'd, low prostrate begs relief,
 Her flowing tears persuade the pitying chief ;
 He saw the Queen of nations wretched doom,
 Giv'n up a prey to tyranny and *Rome*.
 Hell with new rage its ministers inspires,
 They whet their axes, and prepare their fires ;
 Already they believe the conquest gain'd,
 And in their greedy hopes devour the land :
 Vain expectation ! let a *Nassau* come,
 Where is the confidence of hell and *Rome* ?
 He comes, and bids the rescu'd nation smile,
 And liberty returns to bless the isle.
 Triumphant hosts spread their great leader's fame,
 And lawless tyrants tremble at his name.
Namur, thy walls, and, *Boyne*, thy rapid flood,
 Choak'd with slain legions, and desil'd with blood,
 Confess him great in arms ; his trembling foes
 Trenches, or mounds, or tow'rs, in vain oppose ;
 In vain the bastion guards the hostile wall,
 And ramparts mock a foe—he comes—they fall.

FROM his illustrious line young *Orange* came,
 Alike in virtue, as alike in name.
 For blooming *Anne* the youthful hero sigh'd,
 The only lover worthy such a bride :
 He sues, *Britannia*'s monarch heard his pray'r,
 And to his wishes gave the royal fair.

THE joyful hero waits for fav'ring gales,
 Sudden they rise, and fill the swelling sails.
 The prince exulting leaves the *Belgic* shore,
 Nor the winds threaten, nor the billows roar ;
 His guardian Genius bids the tempests sleep,
 And smooths the surface of the briny deep.
 Lav'd by the hoary surge, white cliffs from far,
 To glad the lover's longing eyes appear ;
 Swift glides the vessel to the crowded strand,
 And gives the promis'd hero to the land.
 To proud *Augusta's* tow'rs with eager haste,
 The destin'd scene of all his joys, he pass'd.
 Unheeded shout her sons, unheeded rise
 Her domes and glitt'ring spires, that wound the skies ;
 His ardent passion claim'd his total care,
 And all his thoughts were on the royal fair.
 Lo, she appears to bless his longing sight !
 The fair appears in native beauty bright.
 Not fairer seem'd the fabled Queen of love,
 Descending from the skies to *Ida's* grove :
 Lost in surprize, the *Trojan* boy beheld
 Celestial beauties to his sight reveal'd.
 Receive the prize, O *Paphian* Queen ! he cry'd,
 To *Pallas*, and the wife of *Jove* deny'd :
 In vain my choice thy rival's charms would move,
 Lovely are they, but thou the Queen of love.
 With like surprize the *Belgic* prince survey'd
 The blooming beauties of each royal maid.
 Such lovely nymphs he ne'er before had seen,
 The fairest daughters of the fairest Queen :
 But chiefly *Anna's* charms the hero move,
 Raptur'd he gaz'd, and lost himself in love.

Beauty ineffable adorn'd her face,
 And spoke her of the lovely *Brunswick* race;
 Her native majesty each look exprest,
 And all the princess ev'ry step confest :
 'Midst her attendant train so *Dido* mov'd ;
 The son of *Venus* saw, admir'd, and lov'd,
 Nor less her mind th' illustrious lover fir'd,
 Possess'd of all that makes her sex desir'd :
 Much he admir'd her form, her virtues more ;
 They fix'd the conquest beauty gain'd before.

BUT an amazing stroke his joy restrains :
 Thus the severe decree of Heav'n ordains !
 A sudden heat shoots thro' his glowing blood,
 And noxious ardor taints the vital flood.
 Celestial pow'rs, ye guardians of the brave,
 Your mighty charge from threat'ning danger save !
 Kind Heav'n assents, nor longer will delay
 The bliss of *Albion*, and th' auspicious day ;
 The day indulgent fate ordains shall join
 The race of *Nassau*, with the *Brunswick* line.

THE happy isle exults ; with gen'ral voice
 Her shouting sons applaud their monarch's choice,
 Enjoy their present bliss, and hence presage
 That bliss continu'd thro' each future age.
 They see new heroes hence derive their birth,
 And other *Nassaus* glad th' expecting earth :
 And, should offended Heav'n again ordain
 To threat the nations with the *Gallic* chain,
 From this illustrious line they hope redress,
 And a new *William* to redeem and bless.

LETTER C.

To the same.

MADAM,

1734.

IT gives me a very sensible concern, to hear you are in the least danger of relapsing into that disorder, that you was in at the *Bath*. 'Tis perhaps impossible to reach an absolute independence and superiority of mind to human events; and yet I often fancy myself in a state of insensibility to every thing, but what concerns your happiness; and that is an attachment which will survive the period of mortal life.

MR. ——— has generally a handsome manner of address, which makes me impatient to see a dedication, where the choice is so intirely just. Your Ladyship's character sets human nature in its most agreeable light, and is an instance what perfection it can reach; nor can there be any partiality in giving you a distinction which you certainly merit.

I WISH your Ladyship would be so good as to send me one of your own, and Lady ———'s drawings in *Indian-ink*; I have a great curiosity to see what progress you make. My great attainment at present is colouring prints: If Lady ——— wants any birds for her new *Japan*, I have some at her service. Mrs. ——— is so enchanted with this new japanning, that she has abandon'd Mr. *Baxter*, and the *Greek Fathers*; and employs her time in sticking bears and monkies on all the wooden furniture she can find about the house. I am in happier circumstances; for the screen your Ladyship sent me is a *Raree-shew* for all the women and children about town, who have any thing of a nice and elegant taste.

THE charming cottage your Ladyship has describ'd, appears before me in all its visionary beauty. I should certainly envy the inhabitants of such a charming retreat, if I could not indulge my imagination with the hopes of fairer mansions, in some future world. But however ambitious I am of setting my feet on the starry pavement, I am yet forc'd to content myself with walks of grass, or (not to conceal the mortifying truth) stones and dirt. This is some disadvantage to me, who have renounc'd all local motion, except walking.

I SHALL be in a painful suspense, 'till I hear that your Ladyship is recover'd from this disorder; which will be a sincere pleasure to

Your, &c.



L E T T E R C I.

To the same.

MADAM,

THIS impossible to read Lord ———'s verses, without being delighted with the view of what such a capacity promises to the public: They are, without flattery, surprizing for one of his years.

YOUR Ladyship would get no advantage, by rolling back time; not even to your fine person, which has not yet lost a charm, while your mind has improv'd in every thing that is graceful and elegant in human nature. Twenty years would be a large step backward in your life, unless you are got into the *Egyptian* chronology, and reckon your years by the moon. But after
all

all my criticisms, I am charm'd with your Ladyship's sentiments, as they express a noble ambition to reach the heights of virtue.

IF I should have an aversion to such a place as —, I must be insensible to all that is agreeable in art or nature; nor can I suffer your Ladyship to have such an unjust opinion of me. If there is a spot on earth to which my imagination is fix'd and enchanted, 'tis there: I haunt the grove, ascend the mount, trace the rivulets, and wander thro' every verdant walk. 'Tis true, in my solitary caprices, I take full possession of the house and gardens, and banish every intelligent being from the place, except your Ladyship and the angels; with whom I may own, without breach of modesty, I am so good as never to be out of humour. You will think I am very gracious, not to exclude celestial beings from my retirement; in which I am happy enough, while I can make a virtue of necessity, and credit the moralists, who tell us, that all human pleasures are better in speculation than in reality. For twenty miles, to me, are twenty thousand; and I could as well think of a pilgrimage to the *Holy-land*, or of taking a journey to the moon with *Ganza's*. But I hope some favourable event or other will bring your Ladyship to —; and then you cannot avoid this road, when I may be so happy as to see you *en passant*.

THERE is a sort of infallibility in your judgment of books; I never question the merit of an author which your Ladyship recommends, and will get *Rollin's* history by the first opportunity, Your Ladyship's mentioning Mr. *Hallyburton's* life, when I was with you last, made me read over the account of his death; in which there are some awkward particulars, and little domestic matters, that are very disgusting; but abstract from this, such an exit would have made a glorious figure in a language answerable to the dignity of his sentiments; and thro' all the cant and disguise of a *Scotch* dialect, the

the faint and the hero still appear. I was charm'd to find him blessing the hour of his birth, and triumphing that ever he had commenc'd an immortal being; at a time when the guilty part of mankind are wishing they had never been born, and loading the inauspicious hour with execration, and would sink back into their primitive nothing.

I am, &c.



LETTER CII.

To the same.

MADAM,

July 6. 1734.

YOU would have been molested with my impertinence before this, if Lady ——'s commands had not employ'd me in drawing; which I am afraid was more to flatter my vanity, than to please her own inclination; but that still heightens the favour. I have copy'd the Pastoral Muse from a print Lady Scudamore sent me: The figure is negligently lolling on the grass, in a romantic scene, with cascades, and swans, and little birds on the branches of trees. I will send it as soon as I have an opportunity: The only compliment I desire in return, is something of Lady ——'s drawing.

I AM pleas'd to find your Ladyship has had one interval of what you call real solitude: I should have been so perverse as to have call'd it a crowd, if your obliging wishes to have me with you, could have taken effect. Where-ever you are, I shall frequently visit you in my imagination; and those sort of intellectual com-

com-

compliments, your Ladyship may be assur'd, will always be sincere, and never incommode your most important moments; nor will these airy rambles be attended with anxiety or fatigue.

NOTHING in Dr. *Watts's Juvenile Miscellanies* gives me more pleasure than the description of the *Temple of the Sun*, which is really fine. Nor is it possible to read the *Thankful Philosopher*, without the warmest emotions of gratitude to Heaven, for a thousand distinguishing favours, especially that of living in one of the most happy and glorious periods, that ever the *English* nation enjoy'd; as I can't help thinking the present is, since I have read *Rapin*; which has often excited my gratitude, that I was not fated to breathe in the days of King *Egbert* or King *Saweno*.

I HAVE had a thousand panics for fear you would not let me keep the screen; for it is so pretty, and you had taken so much pains about it, that I had not the assurance to expect or desire it; but if you don't make me send it back again, it will be a surprizing obligation. It is a public benefit to this town, and the joy and wonder of all that set their eyes upon it.

I SUPPOSE a horse with four legs is, by this time, too slow an animal for Lord ———, and he would be glad to have a horse with wings like *Pegasus*. I am really in pain, when I recall with what speed he us'd to measure the plains.

I am, &c.

LETTER CIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

Aug. 2. 1734.

COULD any circumstance in the world raise my envy, it would be the happiness which Mrs. — enjoys in your Ladyship's conversation and friendship; but instead of exciting an uneasy thought, it gives me the highest satisfaction, to find you just to so much real merit. Your Ladyship may justly reproach me, for not enjoying a society in which I confess there are so many charms. Mine is, indeed, a fantastic situation of mind; there is something of mechanism in my reasoning faculty, as well as in my devotion; which seems to depend on just such a place, and such a set of objects. Indeed, I cannot boast of any great share of sense or goodness, but I seem intirely destitute of both, out of my own chamber. My happiness is a sort of Quietism; there is something in your way of life too glaring and tumultuous for the natural sedateness of my temper. If Mrs. —, instead of drawing the picture, could possibly be transform'd into a real *St. Genevieve*; and would sit under a tree, with a good book in her lap, watching her sheep in a very flowery pasture that I could find for her, I should visit her at the rising morning and silent evening. Nor should I have the least objection to the being at —, if your Ladyship could be metamorphos'd into a plain good woman, without any attendants but Mrs. —, and —, sunk into *Lucy* and *Colin*. I dare not carry the transformation to such a prodigious extent, as to turn my Lord — into a reverend Divine, tho' with regard to the next world, perhaps, it would be no disadvantage to his Lordship. Nor have I the least inclination to make any alteration in the house or gardens, which, I confess, have a nearer resemblance to my plans of paradise, than any other prospect

spect which comes within my view; unless what Mr. ———'s drawing gives me, which is done with exquisite skill, and came safe to me.

My imagination could be no manner of help in the contrivance of your grotto; nor can an invention so sparkling as yours want assistance, which appears by the beauty of your description.

You will be so obliging as to make a compliment to Lord ———, and Lady ———, from

Your, &c.



LETTER CIV.

To the same.

MADAM,

WHILE you meet with so many instances of the vanity of earthly grandeur, I need not be very lavish of my morals on that subject; and yet when I am in the humour of dictating, I cannot help saying, what you know very well, without the addition of my testimony to this melancholy truth, that even the revenues of a kingdom cannot procure an exemption from the pains of sickness, or the menaces of death, nor purchase one moment's ease for the most distinguish'd of mortals. There is no relief in that gloomy hour, but

*That glorious solace of immense distress,
A conscience, and a God; a friend within,
And better friend on high. His eye-lids send*

*Beams of immortal youth thro' heav'n's bright regions.
His all-powerful word can health create,
And bid the blessing come amidst the wintry frost.*

I HOPE Lord ——— is by this time recover'd from his feverish disorder. I can't but share with your Ladyship in the concern you feel for him, with regard to the small-pox. May Heaven protect the little angel from that pestilential distemper. If any thing can soften Lord ———'s tortures, it must be your Ladyship's attendance: You are the balm and joy of life to all about you; every gloomy event gives a lustre to your character, and brings the benignity of your temper into action. And amidst all the changes of human affairs, a virtuous mind will feel a secret complacence in believing

*The course of human things is all decreed,
With each minutest circumstance, above:
No fickle chance, no blind contingencies,
No unforeseen events arise, to cross
The purposes divine.*

I HAVE always the brightest expectations from an author that your Ladyship recommends, nor have I been disappointed in Rollin's history; the two first volumes of which I have been reading with a true rational delight: His remarks on the conduct of divine Providence are a proof to me of the author's piety, and thro' every page the delicacy and justness of his sentiments appear. Lady ———'s retreat puts one wise thing in my head, that there is no happiness but in innocence and obscurity.—But to your great comfort my morality is abridg'd for want of room.

I am, &c.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOU will pardon me, I am sure, for presuming to think a person in your station and altitude an object of compassion; but you are really so, even by your own confession: Nor could your Ladyship have nam'd one circumstance of misery greater than that of being confin'd to a crowd of people, who are all of them in a state of hostility and ill-humour with one another; or at least not so peaceably dispos'd, as your Ladyship's sedate and gentle disposition would wish them. But while I pity, and am ready to pray for you, it diverts me, to find you only a little discompos'd, in a situation that would bereave me of my senses, and drive me quite out of my wits.

I AM glad your Ladyship is disgusted with ———; the whole seems to be writ with a malice more than human, and has surely something infernal in it. 'Tis surprizing, that a man can devest himself of the tender sentiments of nature so far, as deliberately to give anguish and confusion to beings of his own kind. Slander and invective do an injury never to be repair'd, and consequently are unpardonable sins.

I SHALL easily dispense with your drawing for me, when it puts you to the least pain. Mr. ——— outshines us all. I have hung his drawing in an eminent place, in my parlour, and no-body that comes there thinks it worth their while to look at any other performance, 'till they have admir'd this: I own myself indebted to him for it. I have just receiv'd a present of the seasons by *Watteau*; the scenes are fine, and the faces very handsome; and I should be glad enough to

hear the music, but averse to being one of the company. I must tell you all the secrets of my heart, whether they are guilty or innocent.

It gives me the most abstract and refin'd pleasure, to hear your Ladyship's character and fine genius admir'd: You are my vanity and pride, nor is it possible for you to be more delighted, to find the public doing justice to Lady ———'s charms and merit, than I find, in the justice done to yours. I am often pleas'd with an opportunity of applying these lines of Dr. Young to your Ladyship's character:

*She strikes each point with native force of mind,
While puzzled learning blunders far behind.*

Graceful to sight, and elegant to thought,

The great are vanquish'd, and the wise are taught.

Her breeding finish'd, and her temper sweet;

When serious, easy; and when gay, discreet;

In glitt'ring scenes o'er her own heart sever'd,

In crowds collected, and in courts sincere.

Mr. Duncombe sent me his proposals for printing Mr. Hughes's works. I am glad he finds encouragement, for he is really an author of genius and strict morals. I hope you will not make such a long pause as your last, before you write to

Your, &c.

L E T T E R C V I.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOU cannot communicate your joys to any person that more sincerely shares in your Ladyship's happiness than I do. While your amusements are so reasonable and innocent, you need not scruple making confessions of yourself to a much severer temper than mine is; and if you tell me the worst of yourself, as I believe you do, you are certainly very good. Not that this awkward common compliment, of telling people they are very good, does reach your Ladyship's character, or at all express my meaning: But I must content myself with human language, for I cannot yet speak in the strains of immortality; tho' I wish for that privilege with more impatience than I ought.

** O longo esilio! O troppo lenta morte!*

THE visionary pleasure that your description of a country scene gives me, perhaps, exceeds what I should find in the reality; and setting aside the beauties that your sparkling imagination and fine language give to every thing that you are pleas'd with, trees are trees, and daisies are daisies, at *Frome*, as well as at the hermitage. And even your Ladyship's nice taste would be delighted with some verdant inclosures, which are my constant haunt, and where I am sure of enjoying an unmolested solitude. However, I am not going to persuade you to inclose *Windsor-Forest*, and banish every human appearance from it; for the society you are blest with has every thing in it agreeable and charming. I am not surpriz'd that with your just and elegant turn of

I 4

thought,

** O tedious exile! O too tardy death!*

thought, you should prefer that innocent wit and unaffected chearfulness, that you find in your own family, to all the noisy mirth of public entertainments. I was pleas'd with a thought I lately read in a modern author, who says, (speaking of solitude) *'Tis even delightful, to think there is a world of spirits, and that we are surrounded with intelligent beings, tho' invisible, rather than in a lonely unconscious universe, a wilderness of insensible matter.*

I HAVE read your two last letters over and over, they infuse a secret gladness into my soul; the peace and serenity of your temper appear in every line: I hear the nightingale's song; and all the gay landscape, the flowery scene, which gives you such a chearfulness, rises in full bloom before me.

I'LL leave you now to trace the sun, and visit the planetary worlds; while I, confin'd to this earthly globe, remain

Your, &c.



L E T T E R CVII.

To the same.

MADAM,

I HAVE at last had the satisfaction of reading Madam de Lambert's *Avis à son Fils & à sa Fille*. Such a just train of reasoning, and those noble reflections, would have given me a sincere pleasure, if I had not been byass'd by your Ladyship's good opinion of the author; but as I was, the satisfaction was more complete. Whatever has the sanction of your applause, I admire without reserve or diffidence: I grow positive and infallible, and

and without being popishly inclin'd in any other point, I yield an implicit assent to all your determinations. The following sentence pleases me, because it is exactly your Ladyship's manner of thinking; and that is the greatest compliment I can make the author. * *Le bonheur est dans le paix de l'ame; vous ne pourrez jouir des plaisirs de l'esprit, sans la santé de l'esprit. Tout est presque plaisir pour un esprit sain.* And I am particularly charm'd with this thought: † *La plus grande marque qu'on est né avec des grandes qualitez, est de vivre sans envie.* This is the constant happy situation of a mind form'd like your Ladyship's. Heaven continue that sacred peace, which is the result of unaffected virtue.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R CVIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOU can say nothing more to Lord ———'s advantage, than that he resembles your own charming sister in her temper and virtues. I can't help wondering that with your Ladyship's sparkling imagination, you will take the pains to see ———, I 5 or

* Happiness consists in the peace of the soul. You cannot enjoy the pleasures of the mind, without the health of the mind: Every thing almost is pleasure to an healthful mind.

† The surest mark that one is born with great qualities, is to live without envy.

or any other fine place, when you may sit still, and exercise your own invention, without any manner of fatigue, or the tumult of a Lady of quality's equipage and attendance. For tho' your motions may not be quite so unwieldy as the *Rhodean Colossus*, and you may stir without many a cart, yet not, as *Cowley* says, without many a mule; and that must be a strange incumbrance to the simplicity of all rural entertainments and sylvan pleasures. You find I have lost my attachment to grandeur and pageantry, and am going to persuade you to dismiss your coachman, and sell your horses; and to ramble thro' the wild woods on your own legs, in order to exercise the self-moving principle, with which nature has endowed you; or else to sit still in your own apartment, and raise palaces and plant groves, at your leisure.

WHY will you force me to recall those happy hours which I pass'd with you at ———? That peaceful period never returns on my memory, without some secret regret that 'tis past.

*But there are soft Elysian shades,
And bow'rs of sweet repose;
Where never any storm invades,
Or tempest ever blows.*

THIS prospect scatters every human care, and spreads a divine tranquility on my soul. The moments are wing'd, I find, by the flight of ten years, that are past since I was at ———.

GIVE me leave to make my compliments to Lady ———, and to subscribe myself

Your, &c.

L E T T E R C I X.

To the same.

MADAM,

TULLIA is certainly a beautiful novel, and appears to be the production of a fine genius. Never was the grandeur and beauty of your own mind more elegantly exprest, than in the character of *Tullia*; which while I am admiring, it heightens the pleasure, to know that such perfection and virtue is more than an agreeable fiction.

Nothing makes me more repine at the incumbrance of a mortal body, than that it confines me from the most agreeable place and conversation on earth. I have now an aversion to all ways of travelling; a chair is my terror, and even a coach and six is quite out of my good graces: I am reconcil'd to nothing but walking, and would sooner begin a pilgrimage to see your Ladyship, than a devout Papist to visit our Lady of *Loretto*. But it will not be long before I shall drop these earthly fetters, and commence a state of greater agility; and then, tho' I have no intention to haunt you as a ghost, I shall certainly make you some friendly, tho' invisible visits, and wait to make my compliments, at your first entrance on the celestial coasts. 'Till that happy period, I am, with the greatest sincerity,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R.

L E T T E R CX.

To the same.

MADAM,

DO *those who on a rack for Heav'n expire,
Love angels and eternal brightness there?
'Tis sure they do!*

as *Lee* says; and 'tis full as sure, that my mind is never in a state of indifference with regard to your Ladyship. I am not yet arriv'd to such an height of mortification to the pleasures of human life, as to make a resolution of seeing you no more. That would be resigning the world at once; and I am so far from that stoical indifference, that I often sooth myself with the thoughts of conversing with you in some happy distant period. But no prophetic impulse yet discovers when, or where, or how; when I would fix, the visionary joy dissolves in trackless air, and is lost in the uncertainty of all future events.

Your Ladyship will make me turn critic, in spite of reason and nature. The easy transition of thought and graceful language of the translation are inimitable; but considering *Tullia* was design'd by *Madame de Lambert* for a perfect character, I think, she indulges a tender passion for *Lentulus* a little too far. However, that guilt is excus'd, by the heroic virtue that appears in her retreat; and nothing can be more charming and natural than the effect of her retirement, when it sinks a tender passion into a generous and innocent friendship; and it delights the reader, to find two persons of the greatest merit happy without a crime. I might remark a thousand other beauties, but at present it will be convenient to conclude my annotations. If you don't write to me sometimes in this month, I am afraid I must resign you, in the next, to the Princess of Saxe-Gotha,

Gotha, and royal weddings, and birth-days; which without any great degree of humility, I may own are things of more importance than

Your, &c.



LETTER CXI.

To the same.

MADAM,

BE mine, ye powers, the faculty of writing sparkling nonsense! for then I find I could compose the most delightful letters.—Indeed I know not well what to say, for my genius owes all its vivacity to your letters; and at present my own guilt will not suffer me to complain of your Ladyship's silence. However I have done violence to my own inclination, out of regard to your tranquility, which I thought was but too often molested by the hurry of the *Grand Monde*; but now you have a sort of vacancy, I beg you to write in a few posts, since the hearing from you is the only thing that I can call a reasonable pleasure, that relates to this world. The pleasures of the imagination are of an inferior class, and those I have had, in finishing the screen; for which I had pictures enough, and some left, which I have given to Mrs. ——— to make her a corner-cupboard, to her great joy and content. I am not surpriz'd to find your Ladyship diverting yourself with the scenes of low life, in the print you are copying, while fields and cottages seem to be the abodes of innocence and peace. I must own that scenes of grandeur and art please me better; but then 'tis only in speculation and at a distance: for without pretending to be more philosophical than I really am, I should chuse

to

to be confin'd to the peaceful shade of some remote wilderness, rather than to the hurry of the most splendid court. I am glad to hear that Mr. _____ has his residence still among mortals, tho' I wish myself in a superior station; but while I am in this, with the greatest sincerity,

I am, &c.



LETTER CXII.

To the same.

MADAM,

SINCE your Ladyship will give me leave to flatter myself, that you writ to me from inclination, and not to fill up the vacancy of an amusement, I shall willingly assent to such an agreeable truth, without raising any modest objections on the occasion.

I AM delighted with all your entertainments, except the *Tent-stitch*; and that I own, I admire, but then 'tis as some people admire virtue, only in speculation. It seems to me an ante-diluvian invention, a task for those long-breath'd people, who spent a sort of eternity on earth, compar'd to the short duration of a modern period. However, I am in no pain for your Ladyship; whether your attempt is a chair or a stool, I suppose it will be an hereditary occupation; if you finish the branch of a tree, and Lady _____, a shepherd's crook, the service of your generation is done, and you may contentedly leave the rest to be finish'd by your children's children.

'TIS a thousand to one, but you have seen these lines of my Lord Orrery's, but for fear you should not, I will give myself the pleasure of transcribing them.

TO MR. POPE.

*Intomb'd with Kings tho' GAY's cold ashes lie,
A nobler monument thy strains supply;
Thy matchless muse still faithful to thy friend,
By courts unaw'd, his virtues dares commend.
Lamented GAY! forget thy treatment past,
Look down, and see thy merit crown'd at last:
A destiny more glorious who can hope?
In life belov'd, in death bemoan'd by POPE.*

THE last part of your Ladyship's letter soothes the mind into a pleasing indifference to all human events: Prosperity and adversity lose their distinction, and are only preferable, as the allotment of Heaven orders them.

By the partiality of some of my acquaintance, the poem of *Joseph* has been so often transcrib'd, and is got into so many hands, that I have been at last flatter'd, or teiz'd, into a consent to let it be publish'd, on condition the author is never known or nam'd. As for success, I have no manner of vanity or concern: I am as proud of adjusting a tulip or a butterfly in a right position on a screen, as of writing heroics.

I am, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R CXIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

THIS will perhaps molest your Ladyship in a moment of importance, and amidst the hurry of the preparation for a birth-night ; but I am in pain 'till you know I am intirely ignorant of * *Curl's* romance of my life and writings ; only what I have seen in an advertisement. I was told of his design indeed, and wrote, and positively deny'd him the liberty of printing any thing of mine : But they tell me he is a mere savage, and has no regard to truth and humanity ; and as he has treated people of greater consequence in the same manner, I am advis'd to suffer no friend to take the least notice of his collection ; and for my own peace, if ever it comes in my way, I never intend to see what is in it. I have often secur'd my happiness, by governing my curiosity ; and I am sure of doing it in this case, because I am so perfectly indifferent to the trifles I have writ, and have at present no manner of ambition, but

*In rural shades, exempt from care and strife,
To lead a calm, secure, inglorious life.*

* This performance is worthy of its author ; for it contains nothing besides the names of some of Mrs. *Rowe's* works ; and an account that she was married, and buried her husband and father, with wrong dates to each of these events. So that, like the rest of *Curl's* biographical writings, it only informs the public, that he was intirely ignorant of every thing relating to the person whose memoirs he attempted to compose.

I CAN look on the various events of human things with indifference, as I know I shall very soon quit the changing scenes of mortality, and enter on a more lasting and important state.

I AM charm'd with Mr. *Pope's* poem on death, in the last edition of his works. I wish I may be in the happy disposition to repeat these lines at that final period.

The world recedes, it disappears;

Heav'n opens on my eyes, my ears

With sounds seraphic ring:

Lend, lend your wings! I mount, I fly;

O grave! where is thy victory?

O death! where is thy sting?

I SUPPOSE your Ladyship will not insist on my giving up the ghost immediately.—Indeed this is not a subject for raillery, nor for superstitious terror; tho', perhaps, this last is the best extreme.

I HAVE been reading over Mr. *Thomson's Seasons* with a new and truly rational delight. One would think you had sat for the picture of the spring. The resemblance I found induc'd me to copy it; for drawing is the constant amusement of my leisure time.

I am, &c.

LETTER CXIV.

To the same.

MADAM,

YOU have had the prime of my thoughts, and I find to my cost, that human intellects are extremely confin'd; 'tis but the same set of images return, however various the expression. This is no reason, indeed, that all the world should turn mutes, for fear of speaking the same words to day, that they said yesterday; nor can it give you any pretence to be silent, while a thousand novelties, that rise from the changing humours and passions of mankind, supply you with new reflections. But for me, who know nothing besides what passes in my solitary thoughts, or the different scenes in which the mute creation appears, I may be well excus'd from endeavouring to entertain a person who knows all that passes in the polite world.

You will certainly give me leave to be dull for the future, without such a tedious apology; especially when I have nature and necessity to plead in my excuse. However, I do not descend to trifling and impertinence with my own approbation, any more than with yours; but sometimes 'tis to avoid the other extreme of appearing too wise or too good, which is a sort of ostentation I would carefully shun: And yet this perhaps is a criminal modesty. One would not think it possible to be oversolicitous in providing for an eternal interest, or that preparing for a death-bed was a matter of less solemnity than dressing for a ball. A person that can weep at a tragedy, need not be offended at another, for dropping a silent tear in the warmth of devotion; nor for listening to a sermon, with as great attention, as a lover of music would mind an opera.

HOWEVER,

HOWEVER, I have no manner of occasion on my own account to make an apology for being either too wise or too good; if you never find cause to reproach me for the opposite extreme, it will be a great happiness for

Your, &c.



LETTER CXV.

To the same.

MADAM,

IF you knew the sentiments of my heart, you would find no reason to complain. You engage more of my attention than any other earthly thing; and if it was possible, I would think of you with more indifference. But I have not attain'd such a degree of philosophy as you imagine, nor ever hope to reach such a height of mortification, as it would require, to break a friendship with one of the most generous and agreeable persons on earth.

It flatters my pride, that you have put me on making an apology for my silence; which I always thought a great relief to you, tho' not to myself. It was my own happiness that I pursu'd in writing to you, without once presuming it could contribute to yours; but nothing will humble my vanity, after the obliging reproaches you have made on this occasion.

'Tis making myself a greater compliment than I can make you, when I confess that you have refin'd my taste into a sort of disgust for every body's conversation, but your own; and I am so careful to keep your good

opinion,

opinion, as if my whole stock of reputation depended on your censure or approbation. However, I must own this attachment is not voluntary; I am unwilling you should have this ascendant over my thoughts, and would, if possible, be disengag'd from every thing below the stars: But there is a sort of fatality in your merit, that will always compel the admiration of

Your, &c.



LETTER CXVI.

To the same.

MADAM,

I WISH your happiness, as I wish the welfare of my own soul; and yet I find a secret pleasure in your uneasiness. I am glad you are discontented, and that you have not made this world your resting-place, but are in pursuit of joys more lasting and refin'd. I should be sorry to find you among the serene and thoughtless mortals, that are content with a repetition of the same vanities from *January* to *December*, without the least variety, or ever forming a wish for more reasonable and exalted delights.

I AM forcing the character of a saint on your Ladyship in spite of your heart; for I verily believe you had not a thought of acquiring that dignity by any thing in your letter: But I hope and believe, you will be found in that glorious class, when all other distinctions of grandeur are forever cancell'd.

I AM charm'd with your beautiful description of Lady ———'s grotto; which has given me all the pleasure
the

the view of it could afford, without the fatigue of going thither to see it. These intellectual pleasures are agreeable to my taste, and this is a way of being happy, without the toil that attends the satisfactions of sense.

YOUR Ladyship's commands to answer your letter by the first post, are perfectly obliging: When I delay, 'tis often to avoid being impertinent, and for fear you should drop my correspondence, before the approach of death shall warn me to send you a final adieu.

*Transporting period! when wilt thou appear?
Thou blissful dawn of that immortal day,
That ne'er shall see a dusky evening spread
To veil its light; which ne'er shall need the sun,
Nor stars, nor glimm'ring moon to chear its shade.*

*YE fair inhabitants of blissful seats,
Unfold your golden gates, and call me hence:
Sick of this mortal state, this round of error,
Of darkness and mistake, I long for rest.*

PERHAPS this impatience to retire from this tempestuous world may be the effect of cowardice. I own these public rumours of war, and nation rising against nation, have a dismal prospect. The angel standing in the sun (as he is describ'd in the *Revelations*) seems to be making his solemn invitation to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, to gather themselves together to the supper of the great God, that they may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of horses, and of those that sit on them.—This invitation has in it a surprizing grandeur.

Adieu sans cerimonie.

LETTER CXVII.

To the same.

MADAM,

IF you could flatter me, that my resentment would give you any uneasiness, I should certainly make use of that power to my own advantage, by extorting longer letters from you. It would make me proud, to have the least ascendant over a mind like yours; nor would that vanity be without a just excuse.

WHATEVER detriment the public might suffer by your absence, I can't help wishing your Ladyship sequester'd in some peaceful retreat, for a two-fold reason: First, that I might hear oftener, that you are still walking on the face of the earth; and, secondly, that you might enjoy a more reasonable happiness. I can easily believe your present situation is not the sphere of your felicity.

* *QUELS plaisirs fournissent ces vains entretiens, qui consomment la plus grande portion de vie? Ces murmurs confus, ces discours superficiels, qui excitent une troupe de diseurs de rien? Ces cercles ennuyeux, où l'on demande au soleil & à la pluie, de quoy fournir des sujets? Quels plaisirs dans ces visites continuelles, presque toujours également à la chagrin des ceux qui les font, & ceux qui les reçoivent.*

* What entertainment can these vain conversations afford, which consume the greater part of our lives? these confus'd murmurs, these superficial discourses of a company of talkers on nothing? these tiresome circles, in which we beg of the sun and the rain to supply us with subjects? What pleasure can we find in these perpetual visits, that, almost always, equally chagrin those who make them, and those who receive them?

I HAVE

I HAVE been quoting one of Monsieur *Saurin's* sermons, and shall not be quite happy 'till your Ladyship has read him: Whatever is said of the force and beauty of the *Roman* eloquence, you will find in those discourses.

YOUR Ladyship, I perceive, will not be at leisure, this month, to moralize at your hermitage on the vanity of human things; but wherever you are, may you be the care of celestial Providence.

I AM afraid Mrs. ——— is really elop'd from mortals, or that she has made a vow never to mimic the despicable figures of the alphabet any more. ——— You would be glad if some other amusement at present employ'd

Your, &c.



LETTER CXVIII.

To MR. THO. ROWE.

I SHOULD be too vain, if I believ'd any thing I can write could give you half the satisfaction your letter gave me. Tho' you have so often assur'd me of the constancy of your affection, I always hear the tender protestation with new pleasure. I read your letter over and over, and grow proud to find I have secur'd the heart of a man of your sense and merit. I shall make it the business of my life to fix your esteem, and think that reward worth all my care.

'Tis with great reason I am more impatient of your absence than you can be of mine. I hope not to be disappointed of hearing from you the next post; nothing but that can give me any pleasure at this distance from you. Pray be here as soon as you can; 'till then adieu. May every watchful angel guard you.



LETTER CXIX.

To the same.

I COULD not content myself with sending my service to you by Mr. ———; there was something in that so cold and formal, and so unequal to the tenderness I would express, that I resolv'd to write to you, and send you all my soul; but words cannot paint that sincere affection, that amity and just esteem, that such merit as yours has inspir'd. However, I would flatter myself that your own heart will dictate something of what I would speak, and inform you with what impatience you are expected by

Your PHILOMELA.

LETTER

LETTER CXX.

To the same.

I FIND by your letter, that you are got well to the end of your journey; in this my prayers were answer'd, and may the heavenly guardians still protect, and return you again to my wishes.

IN the mean time, I shall give no-body occasion to make panegyrics on my wit or good-humour; the little share I have of either, is owing to the ambition I have to please you. This gives a serenity to my thoughts, and a vivacity to my conversation. If I endeavour to say a fine thing, 'tis only to gain your applause; and when you are absent, 'tis indifferent to me whether I speak common sense or not; all society grows insipid, and I hear nothing that deserves the least attention; even the rural scenes fail to please me; the verdant shades and flowery fields, since you are gone, have lost their charms.

YOU flatter my vanity, in writing with so much gallantry and politeness; and if making it the business of my life to be agreeable to the man I love, can engage your heart, my happiness is secure. Nor is it possible such merit as yours should ever suffer me to grow indifferent,

While life and breath remain; and when at last

I feel the icy hand of death prevail,

My heart-strings crack, and all my senses fail,

I'll fix thy image in my closing eye,

Sigh thy dear name, then lay me down and die.

LETTER CXXI.

To Mrs. SARAH ROWE.

I AM extremely concern'd, that my brother *William* has his health no better than when he was at the *Bath*, and should have been very glad, if he could have ventur'd himself in the country. Tho' I don't see you, the interest and happiness of your family is never out of my thoughts. I pray for nothing with greater sincerity, than for blessings on you and your children; and tho' the dear youth on whom I plac'd all my happiness, is rent from my arms, my future life is devoted to his memory, and my spotless vows shall be forever his. My heart bleeds afresh when I name him, and tears put a stop to what I would speak.

*I am, my dear Mother,**Your, &c.*

LETTER CXXII.

To the same.

I AM sorry I have given my dear mother so much trouble, as it must be to dispatch so much business so soon. I am glad to hear I have money enough to pay my bills. My wants have been hitherto plentifully supply'd by the divine Providence, on which I desire immediately to rely, without the least regard to second causes. I would turn my eyes from the whole creation, and direct all my expectations to the God before whom my fathers

fathers have walk'd ; the God that has fed me all my life-long 'till now, the Angel that has redeem'd me from all evil.

*O who has tasted of his clemency
In greater measure, or more oft than I?
Which way so'er I turn my eyes or feet,
I see his goodness, and his mercy meet.*

When every comfort on earth fail'd me, he knew my soul in its adversity ; and was all my support, when darkness and despair surrounded me. *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits !* While I have memory and thought, let me not forget his goodness, nor suffer his mercy to slip one moment from my thoughts. Let me remember the vows of my distress, and perform them to my gracious Benefactor.

I HAVE my health, I thank God, at present, and am not half so lean as I was in the winter ; but I am still persuaded I have not long to stay in this world.

*Oh ! if my threat'ning sins were gone,
And death had lost his sting,
I could invite the angel on,
And chide his lazy wing.*

MR. WATTS.

THE news of your illness has given me a thousand melancholy thoughts. May Heaven long preserve your life, on many accounts besides mine ; to me indeed it is one of the greatest blessings I enjoy : For I feel the ties of gratitude and virtue to be as tender and sensible as the strongest ties of nature. I hope your next will bring me the welcome news of your perfect recovery, and the health of all your family, which is the most sincere prayer of,

My dear Mother,

Your, &c.

LETTER CXXIII.

*To the same.**My dear Mother,*

I FEEL exquisite affliction for my brother's illness; but 'tis not his interest in this world, nor even his life, that gives me the most sensible concern: If Heaven gives his mind a relish and disposition for immortal happiness, I confess my warmest wishes are answer'd. O may that God, that has been your dwelling place from generation to generation, confirm his covenant with the seed of the righteous; and may you find that treasure you have committed to him secur'd, when the times of refreshing shall come! Indeed I have no fears left on this head, when I consider the souls of your children were made the charge of Providence by the prayers of their dying father. A just man would take charge of the estate of an orphan left to his care, and *shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* I am satisfy'd, I shall find the spirit of my much-lov'd husband triumphing before the throne of God, as soon as my release from this tiresome world is sign'd.

O fly, ye ling'ring hours!

I DARE not persuade my father to change the air, nor undertake a journey to *London*, for fear what the consequence may be. Our ways are in the hands of God, who prevents, or succeeds our designs; there is a determin'd event to every thing, which 'tis not in the power of man to resist. These thoughts keep my mind from much anxiety. There can pass but a few circling years, and all will be well; mortality itself is the greatest incumbrance: But 'twill not be long before these walls of separation will moulder into their primitive dust, and we shall meet in perfect purity and joy.

*I am, my dear Mother,**Your, &c.*

LETTER

LETTER CXXIV.

To the same.

I AM extremely concern'd to hear that my dear mother has not her usual health. It shall be my constant prayer, that Heaven may long preserve your life, as a blessing to your family, and an example of unblemish'd piety to all your friends. I cannot but hope we shall meet again in this world, and please myself with the thoughts of enjoying my dear mother the next summer in the country. I am else hopeless of seeing you; for the more I think, the more I am resolv'd on an absolute retreat from this world, of whose vanity Heaven has effectually convinced me, in the breach of the tenderest engagement of life. I have now no fears or hopes, that regard this world; and as to the next, I thank God, and ascribe it intirely to his goodness, all my prospects are gay and transporting: And I am only waiting here, like the hireling, for the close of the evening, which is drawing on apace, and then I shall lie down to rest.

ADIEU, my dear mother, God grant you may be long continued a joy and consolation to all your friends, and to none more than to

Your, &c.

LETTER CXXV.

To the same.

IF I knew any arguments to allay my own grief, I would use them with my dearest mother. The news of my * brother's death came in a time when I was ill prepar'd for it: But I am persuaded the lives we lament are both perfected in immortal glory.

My brother's ill state of health has hung heavy on my soul, ever since he was here. Heaven can witness, how often, amidst the watches of the night, I have sent up petitions for his eternal welfare; and I am persuaded the Spirit of God assisted me with more warm and prevailing arguments than were usual in other cases to my formal heart. And amidst all the bloom and gayety of youth, that powerful voice that said, *Let there be light, and there was light*, could easily, and in an instant, give the soul a disposition for immortal pleasure, and the splendor of the beatific vision; of which I am fully persuaded my much-lov'd brother is now possess'd.

I TAKE much more care of my life than 'tis worth, on any account, but what regards another; for, oh! I long to be at rest; tir'd with vanity and life, I would fain lie down in the peaceful solitude of the grave; in the grave, where all my earthly joys lie buried.

I am, &c.

* Mr. William Rowe: He died on the same day with Mr. Singer, April 18th. 1719.

LETTER CXXVI.

To the same.

YOUR letter, my dear mother, brought me very agreeable news, after a thousand fears and anxious thoughts for my poor sister; and I desire to join with you in the most sincere and pious gratitude to her great Deliverer. God has blest you with children, that in every respect might be the pride and boast of the happiest mothers; and if there should have been no allay, your satisfaction would have been too great for a state so uncertain as mortal life. Those that are gone, like flowers in the spring, appear'd, and soon retir'd to the fountain of life and beauty; where you'll find them for ever flourishing in the paradise of God.

I AM now making up accounts with the young gentleman to whom my father was guardian, and in a few months I hope to be intirely free; and as to all affairs of this world, to set my house in order to die. And oh! that I may be as ready as to my spiritual and great account; and then, how welcome will my release and long expected freedom be, from a life, which tho' crown'd with unmerited blessings, yet at best, is but vanity! But I am on the borders of rest, and the happy regions are almost in sight.

I HAVE endeavour'd to make resolutions of going to *London*, this spring; but there still hangs a dead weight on my soul, that takes off all the springs of action; and 'tis likely my next remove will be to the mansions of the dead. There is no sight, on this side heaven, more dear to me, than that of my dear mother; but I dare flatter myself with no prospect of happiness on this side the confines of Paradise.

I am, &c.

LETTER CXXVII.

To Miss SARAH ROWE.

AFTER I have told you, my dear sister, that your brother is well, I have nothing in the world of consequence to say to you. Perhaps you expect I should excuse my silence; but my letter will effectually convince you how little you suffer at any time by my neglects of that nature; and instead of begging your pardon for writing no sooner, I find I want all your charity to forgive my writing now,—I am quite tir'd with my own dulness, these formal sentences will never reach to the bottom of the paper. If I should go on after this grave manner, you'll be tempted to think I have patch'd up a letter out of *Wit's Commonwealth*; but I assure you 'twill be doing me the last injustice, for 'tis all my own, and has put my genius on the stretch too.

I THINK I'll talk of love now, for that's my darling theme; and I am sure it ought to be yours. Now, with the help of a fine quotation, I hope I shall fill up the rest of my paper. I can't talk of love, without bringing in the country scenes, which never fail to indulge the soft passion.

See what delights in sylvan scenes appear,

Descending Gods have found Elysium here.

In woods bright Venus with Adonis strays,

And chaste Diana haunts the forest shade.

Come, lovely nymph, and bless the silent hours,

When swains from shearing seek their nightly bow'rs

When weary reapers quit the sultry field,

And, crown'd with corn, their thanks to Ceres yield.

Some God conduct you to these blissful seats,

The mossy fountains, and the green retreats.

Where-e'er

*Where'er you walk, cool shades shall fan the glade ;
 Trees, where you sit, shall croud into a shade ;
 Where'er you tread, the blushing flow'rs shall rise ;
 And all things flourish, where you turn your eyes.*

I am, my dear Sister,

Your, &c.



LETTER CXXVIII.

To the same.

YOUR brother is very devoutly reading *Quarles* to me, and by that, gives me a good excuse to write nonsense. We are reduc'd to the last necessity, by the want of our things, and Mr. *Rowe* is forc'd to read the pamphlets of the last age for his entertainment. He continues very well, and does not complain of the least disorder in his health. We are still at *Agford*, and should taste all delights the country scenes afford, if we could meet such nymphs as you in every verdant shade to converse with ; your company would complete the enjoyment, and give the groves and streams new charms. You know, my dear sister, that I am always unaffected and sincere in these kind of professions.

*'Tis not indeed my talent to engage
 In lofty trifles, or to swell my page
 With wind and noise ; but freely to impart,
 As to a friend, the secrets of my heart :
 And in familiar speech to let you know,
 How much I love you, and how much I owe.*

*Knock at my heart, for thou hast skill to find
 If it sound solid, or be fill'd with wind;
 And thro' the veil of words thou view'st the naked
 mind.*

AFTER all this verse and prose, I hope you'll grant I have wrote a long letter; but have a little patience, and I'll release you, with my most grateful thanks and sincere duty to my mother, to whom I have too great obligations to be express'd; but all that obedience and gratitude can return, she may still command from me.

I am, my dear Sister,

Your, &c.



L E T T E R CXXIX.

To the same.

IF the *Spectator* had not told me, that the greatest friendships are least noisy and talkative, my own experience would have convinced me of it. I can't tell you, my dear sister, how much I value you, without doing violence to my own temper, which is extremely reserv'd in making pretensions of this nature. But I must do myself the justice to assure you, that absence has not at all lessen'd my esteem for you, tho' I have been so very slow in telling you so. I never wander in these charming walks, to indulge a serious thought, but I wish you here, and fancy with how much pleasure our conversation might rise from earthly to heavenly things, and paint the blissful groves and fields of light, where love and sacred friendship reign for ever.

I HOPE

I HOPE you have your health better than you had in town; and for your being happy, I don't doubt but 'tis the care of Providence to make you so. Adieu, my dear sister, and may the light of his countenance, whose benignity is better than life, conduct you to immortal joys.

I am, &c.



LETTER CXXX.

To the same.

HOW happy, my dear sister, should I think myself, if I could kindle one spark of that heavenly fire in your breast, that burns so faintly in my own! How blest should I be, to find it in my power to help you forward but one step in those sacred paths, from which I myself shall, perhaps, for ever err!

*The gates of hell stand open night and day,
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way;
But to ascend, and view the blissful skies,
There the fatigue and mighty labour lies.*

'Tis a difficulty, which in some anxious moments almost tempts me to yield to my fears, and tamely give up my title to an immortal crown, and bid the fields of light adieu. Thus,

*By glimm'ring hopes, and gloomy fears,
We trace the sacred road;
Thro' dismal deeps, and dang'rous snares,
We make our way to God.*

I MIGHT

I MIGHT have sav'd myself, and you, my dear sister, the trouble of this letter; but that I should not have seen you without some confusion, after I have so long neglected to write to you; and this would have been some allay to the pleasure I promise myself in meeting you again. We shall be in *London*, I hope, next week. I have persuaded Mr. *Rowe* to go a fortnight before his time, for fear the weather and roads should prove intolerable. If any thing could make me love the town, 'twould be the tenderness I have for you: My manner of expressing it is perhaps too reserv'd.

*My words are few, but from an honest heart ;
And truth makes up for eloquence and art.*

But the liberty and solitude I enjoy in the country, charms me so much, that to gain that happiness, I could even bid you, my dear sister, farewell, 'till we meet in the realms of uninterrupted peace and pleasure.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R CXXXI.

To the same.

I HAVE been just taking a solitary walk, and entertaining myself with all the innocent pleasures, that verdant shades, painted flowers, fragrant breezes and warbling birds can yield. If I could communicate my pleasure by description, I would call the muses to assist me; but I am afraid 'twould be insipid to you, that are but moderately fond of the country. Yet I am
sure

sure you would relish any pleasure that heighten'd your devotion; and what can more effectually raise it, than viewing the beauties of nature? I have been pulling a thousand flowers in pieces, to view their elegance and variety, and have a thousand times with rapture repeated *Milton's* lines.

*These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty, thine this universal frame,
Thus wond'rous fair; thyself how wond'rous then!
Speak, ye, who best can tell, ye sons of light,
Angels; for ye behold him.*————

They indeed behold the great Original; but 'tis not deny'd me to trace his footsteps in the flowery fields, and hear some faint echoes of his voice, in the harmony of birds, or meet his gentle whispers, in the softness of the evening breezes; yet this only raises my impatience to be admitted to the blissful vision of uncreated beauty.

*My soul the most exalted pitch would fly,
And see him in the heights of majesty.*

WE shall be in *London*, in a very little time. I long to see you, and expect the happy moment with the last impatience; but I own I should relish my happiness more perfectly, if we were to meet in some rural shade, remote from the noise and tumult of the town: But all human bliss must have its allay, and we are not to expect unmingled pleasures, 'till we meet in the walks of *Paradise*.

ADIEU, my dear sister; may angels guard you, and Heaven bless you with perpetual smiles.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXXXII.

To the same.

WHEN I write to you, my dear sister, I can't forbear talking of what lies nearest my heart, and raising a fresh concern in yours, for the loss of your charming brother. Since that fatal moment, my soul has never known a joy that has been sincere. I look backward, and recall nothing but tormenting scenes of pleasures that have taken their everlasting flight; and forward, every prospect is wild and gloomy. Why was I ever happy? or why can't I, by any motives of reason, forget the object of my care? That's impossible! the charming form appears forever in my sight, and I half deceive myself with imaginary joys; but when I recover from the soft delusion, I grow perfectly wild and savage, and fly humankind, because I can see nothing that resembles him; and am disgusted at every sound I hear, because it does not imitate his voice.

*O he was all my soul! wealth, friendship, honour,
All present joys, and earnest of the future,
Were all summ'd up in him.*

THE * inclos'd, my dear sister, is what my melancholy fancy dictated on the return of the fatal day that robb'd me at once of all the joys of life; a day that I have forever consecrated to solitude and grief. My constancy to the charming youth, and regard to his memory, shall be the pride and glory of my life; and I flatter myself it shall be mention'd at my funeral, and
writ

* The poem on the return of the day on which Mr. Rowe died, printed in vol. I. p. 115.

writ on my grave.—I would say more, but my spirits sink too much, and tears prevent the rest.

O celestial point, that ends this mortal story!



LETTER CXXXIII.

To the same.

I HAVE been hearing an anthem extremely well sung to a spinet; the words were, *How amiable are thy tabernacles! my soul longeth, yea fainteth for the courts of the Lord.* You may much more easily imagine than I can express, the pleasure of such an entertainment: It has been a taste of the joys of immortality. I can think of nothing else at present, and so you'll escape being teiz'd, this time, with what uses to be my eternal theme, the groves and flowery fields. But even in these there's order and harmony.

What ravishes the soul, or charms the ear,

Is music, tho' a various dress it wear.

Beauty is music too, tho' in disguise;

Too fine to touch the ear, it strikes the eyes,

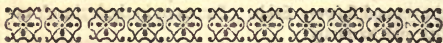
And, thro' them, to the soul the silent stroke conveys.

I HOPE you saw the lights that appear'd in the skies last week. You know my temper is soft and credulous to the last extreme, therefore 'twill not be hard for you to think, what a deep impression such an appearance must make on my imagination. Those that know more of the course of nature, may view these things with less surprize; tho' I confess I saw nothing terrible,

terrible, but all was glorious and extraordinary; and if it was sent as a presage, a light so agreeable can foretel nothing but happiness and prosperity. My father and all the family, wanting my curiosity, went to bed, and left nobody but me and my maid to view the wonders in the heavens. And in spite of the cold, and my own indisposition, I staid 'till near two a clock in the morning in the open air, while, as far as I know, all the town besides lay drown'd in stupid slumbers. But I never saw a sight so magnificent as the streams of glory that seem'd to flow over the firmament, just at midnight. With what rapture, at that silent hour, did I survey the wonders of God's power and greatness in the skies! 'Twas the most agreeable scene my eyes ever beheld; but I hope, one time or other, to see a brighter, at the dawn of the eternal morning. But oh! how long, before the day-break, and the shadows fly away!

I wish you a thousand blessings, and

am, &c.



LETTER CXXXIV.

To the same.

IF I could write to you, my dear sister, with half the pleasure that I could talk to you, you would hear oftner from me. There are a thousand impertinent negligent things, which have a very good air in conversation, that make but a silly appearance, when one comes to write them down, and subscribe to them in a formal manner. If I was talking to you, I should, without the least remorse, enter into a panegyric on the art magic, and tell you how much I envy'd *Tasso's Ar-*

mida,

mida, who could in an instant raise gardens and groves by the power of enchantment; while I am forc'd to wait the slow progress of nature, and the awkward operation of human hands. For after all my hopes and endeavours, I have nothing towards a garden, but a stone wall. This dry weather withers every thing, and now the patient people tell me, I can do nothing 'till another spring; as if I was to live to the age of *Shalum's* mistress in the *Spectator*. These disappointments are, indeed, trifles in the course of life; but yet they ought to produce this serious reflection, that *man walks in a vain shew, and disquiets himself in vain.*

I AM extremely pleas'd with the tragedy of the *Fall of Siam*; but am ready, at any time, to retract my opinion, in deference to the public taste. I am very much oblig'd to Mr. ———, for endeavouring to procure the *French Cato* for me. If he goes to the *Bath* this summer, I hope he'll stay some time at *Frome*; but for the next summer, I have no hopes or fears, that concern such a distance of time.

I find I had no reason to write in a capital hand, for I shall fill up my paper, and leave some impertinence for the next opportunity.

I am, &c.



LETTER CXXXV.

To Mr. WILLIAM ROWE.

MY heart has charg'd you, my dear brother, with nothing but what is incident to mortality; with nothing but that mutability, to which the whole creation

is subject : And indeed the whole creation pleads in your excuse ; the changing seasons, and the revolutions of the heavens themselves, reproach my heart for the confidence it plac'd in vain man.

You hardly think the tears are falling from my eyes, as indeed they are, while I am writing in this fantastic manner.

My soul is ill prepar'd, my dear brother, to see you ; I know you will recall to my thoughts a thousand distracting scenes, that I vainly strive to blot from my memory ; unless you are as much alter'd in every thing, as you tell me you are in your temper, and have lost all resemblance of your brother. I am impatient to see you, and yet I can't promise myself a moment's satisfaction ; my soul is so us'd to melancholy images, that nothing cheers the eternal gloom. You need not bring any new books into the country with you ; for since Mr. *Rowe's* death all kinds of entertainment are insipid to me, and I look on every thing below the stars with indifference and contempt.

Adieu.



LETTER CXXXVI.

To the same.

My dear Brother,

YOU are very patient to bear with my epistles, since I can send you no intelligence from wilds and deserts, and know as little of this world, as people who have made their exit from it ; which makes it very hard for me to maintain a correspondence with any of my friends who are still surviving ; nor are people very fond

fond of conversing with spectres and departed spirits. But there is a sort of serious and melancholy pleasure, in fancying one's self in a state of separation. As all my joys lie buried in the dust, my imagination fixes itself with ease on these subjects; nor does the silence and solitude which reigns eternally in my chamber, differ very much from that of a sepulchre. However, my thoughts are not intirely confin'd to these gloomy mansions, but sometimes make excursions into the *Elysian* fields and myrtle groves;

*Where crown'd with flow'rs they rest on mossy beds,
By crystal streams that murmur thro' the meads.
No wintry horrors blast the blissful clime,
But spring perpetual smiles in rosy prime:
Nor guilt, nor woe pollute the happy plains,
But pleasure in eternal triumph reigns.*

But the soothing vision soon disappears, and I return to dull mortality again, and eat, and drink, and dream successively, with some short intervals of reason; which are fill'd up with impatient wishes for the breaking of the immortal day, when this low and wretched part of existence shall find a period — then all beyond is active pleasure, and undecaying life.

ADIEU, my dear brother, I would willingly flatter myself, that I am on the borders of the immaterial world, and shall never see you more, 'till we meet above the stars. But oh! may you see a thousand happy days, and practise the noblest heights of virtue, when I am releas'd from all the toils and sorrows of mortality, and gently rest on my dusty bed.

I am, &c.

LETTER CXXXVII.

*To the same.**My dear Brother,*

YOU are not more charm'd with your hero, than I am to find you pleas'd with the most noble and sublime parts of the new tragedy. 'Tis true, according to the weakness of my sex, I might have been touch'd with beauties of a more soft and effeminate nature; but it shews a superior turn of mind, to enter into public and generous sentiments, of which you express so just an admiration.

You have too modest an opinion of yourself, in suspecting my friendship; tho' the tender relation I had to your brother is dissolv'd, a thousand other obligations bind me to the interest of your family, which no time, nor accident, will have power to blot from my soul. While virtue and gratitude are words of sacred importance, I shall never lose the remembrance of the series of favours I receiv'd from you in my late happy relation. Your whole family seem'd in a gentle confederacy, how to crown my hours with tranquility and joy.—May that kind and generous treatment I had among you, find a full retribution; whatever blessings Heaven has in store for mortals, may they be all yours.

For myself, I ask nothing, but to conclude my part as soon as possible, and to finish the great action of life with the applause of that impartial Judge, who knows the most secret intentions of my soul.

BUT whatever variety of happiness, whatever duration of being I shall pass, my esteem for you will be unalterable: Those sparks of amity and beneficence which Heaven has kindled in my breast, can never be extin-

extinguish'd; this sacred principle of Love shall be perpetually improving in the peaceful realms of light.

When constant Faith, and holy Hope shall die,

One lost in certainty, and one in joy;

Then thou, more happy pow'r, fair Charity,

Triumphant sister, greatest of the three,

Thy office and thy nature still the same,

Lasting thy lamp, and unconsum'd thy flame,

Shalt still survive

Shalt stand before the throne of heav'n confess,

Forever blessing, and forever blest.

PRIOR.

Adieu.



LETTER CXXXVIII.

To the same.

My dear Brother,

MY friendship for you burns with an undecaying flame, and is as constant as the breath of life; and even when that shall cease, and the dust returns to its primitive dust, and the spirit to its divine original, this holy passion shall acquire new activity.

Be assur'd that nothing that concerns yourself can be insignificant to me: If you would but lengthen out your letters, tho' it were with the most trifling things you can invent, 'twould be agreeable to one that has the fondest concern for you.

IF

If you knew the disposition of my heart, you would have no reason to make an apology for not writing in a more gay and sprightly manner. Whatever is pensive and serious, suits my natural taste, and is intirely agreeable to the present gloomy circumstances of my life. I am quite tir'd with the calm and happy mortals that surround me, and, to my great vexation, I can't meet one countenance in which there is not an absolute vacancy of thoughtfulness and care. 'Tis surprizing, that such serene and untroubled stupidity can be maintain'd amidst all the miseries of mortality.

*How vain is hope, and how vexatious thought!
From growing childhood to declining age,
How tedious ev'ry step! how gloomy ev'ry stage!
This course of vanity almost complete,
Tir'd in the field of life, I hope retreat
In the still shades of death: For dread, and pain,
And grief, will find their shafts elanc'd in vain,
And their points broke, retorted from the head,
Safe in the grave, and free among the dead.*

PRIOR.

I am, &c.

P. S. I forgot to bid the honest man who is to call at your house, knock, if he found the door shut. If that should be the case, I am sure he'll be guilty of no violence, but will return back as innocently as any *Hottentot* just brought out of his native rock. I believe he never made any noise since he was born.

LETTER CXXXIX.

To the same.

I HAVE a thousand kind and serious things to say to my dearest brother; but oh! in what language shall I speak? Lend me your harps, ye angels, and teach me some of the melting notes by which you give departing saints a taste of celestial raptures.

*Such notes as echo thro' the blissful plains,
When your immortal loves inspire the strains.*

Heavens! that creatures born for infinite things should ever trifle! that beings form'd for lasting and unmingled happiness, should give up their pretensions for unsubstantial dreams and fleeting shadows!

INSTEAD of opening the scenes of paradise, I am got into a splenetic reflection on the miseries of mortality.—'Twill not be otherwise, while my soul wears a mortal frame; but when I have learn'd the songs of paradise, I'll endeavour to allure you from this vain world to the heavenly regions.

I HAVE just heard that Mr. ——— is dead, and so suddenly, that he was sitting in his chair with no mortal in the room; only his wife heard a dismal groan, and running to him, found him speechless, and his eyes set in death. His wretched life and infidel principles have given my thoughts a very melancholy turn, and I have chosen this serious moment to write to my dearest brother. Nor can I imagine, why the subject should be disagreeable to you: To you, I would persuade myself, death has nothing in his aspect but smiles and graces. And oh!

*Whene'er thou dy'st, may arms of angels waft thee
To those smooth joys that have no broken moment.*

I FANCY you look on my letters as constant *memento's* of mortality, and open them with as much solemnity as you do a sermon flitch'd in black paper, with a death's head in the frontispiece. But, my dear brother, while mortality hangs about us, the solemn truth will return on our memory, whatever pains we take to banish it.

I am, &c.



LETTER CXL.

To the same.

I Do not envy you the pleasure of reading Mr. ——'s tragedy; but, my dear brother, I confess I envy him the happiness of having pleas'd so exact a judge. I don't question but 'tis extremely fine, since it has deserv'd your approbation. I believe you need not be in any pain about the disposal of the author's heart; he knows how a heroine should be made, and if he does not find real graces, can easily supply them out of his own gay imagination. You know a poetic fancy has

Lengths, and heights, and depths unknown,

Broad fields with blooming glories sown,

And seas, and skies, and stars its own,

In an unmeasur'd sphere.

Dr. WATTS.

BUT I fancy, when your turn comes to love, you will not be so cheaply provided with materials to complete your felicity. But oh! indulge this noble delicacy, it may guide you to perfect happiness. For sure the charming passion has a divine original, for *God himself is Love*; by him the sacred flame was kindled, and fills the soul with generous sentiments and elegant desires: It breaks thro' all created perfection, and keeps on its restless course to the first Pattern of whatever is excellent or fair.

YOU see, my dear brother, whether I tread the paths to perdition, or those that guide me to the stars, Love is the moving principle: 'Tis so, I am sure, when I make wishes for your happiness, and pray that every gentle power above may be propitious to my dearest brother.



LETTER CXLI.

To the same.

PERHAPS I treated you with too much sincerity in my last; but, my dear brother, you find by it, that I believe every thing of you that can be an advantage to your character, and would fancy, that you possess every shining quality that makes you resemble the object of my fondest thoughts and endless grief: He taught my heart a passion, whose nicety and grandeur could not fail of giving my future thoughts a sort of serious elevation; while with gratitude I acknowledge the power, and bless the divinity of Love.

WHEN you make wishes for me again, my dearest brother, let not long life be join'd to the blessings you

ask. I am tir'd with the vanities beneath the sun; all the pleasures that amuse mankind are but dreams of happiness, shades and fantastic appearances. You don't believe me, I know; but the fatal experiment will convince you of this melancholy truth, within the course of a few circling years, if Heaven permits you to reach them; if not, when arm'd with virtue,

*What is there in this dreadful nothing, Death,
That we should fear?*

Whatever darkness hangs on the gloomy valley, beyond it ten thousand dazzling scenes arise, more beautiful than the visions of *Mirza*. For my part, I set no limits to my expectations, nor restrain my fancy from making the boldest excursions into these infinite regions, where I behold beauty in all its exquisite variety, and hear the sound of immortal harmony.

*I walk among the mansions of the Gods,
The soft recesses, and the blest abodes.*

I AM got into the celestial stile, and would fain forget, that I am writing to a beau, a mere terrestrial creature. But oh!

I sink at once, and leave the skies.

How transient are the flights of devotion! how soon do earthly objects return with all their seducing advantages!

*Faint are the efforts of my will,
And mortal passion charms my soul astray.*

ADIEU, my dearest brother. May Heaven make you happy beyond the limits of your own wishes.

L E T T E R CXLII.

To the same.

YOU are in the right, my dear brother, in believing that I had much rather date my letters to you from the morning star, or the argent fields of the moon, than from a little village in the county of Somerset. Mortality itself, without its attendant evils, seems to me a very humbling circumstance; and I am delighted with the divines for giving it the reproachful terms of slavery, chains, imprisonment, and every thing hateful to reason and nature. But since there is no concealing the mortifying truth, without quitting the pleasure of your correspondence, I am content you should know, that I am still below the stars, confin'd to these dusty regions, breathing the gross element of air, and drinking tea instead of nectar, and incumber'd with a body of clay, instead of sparkling in a vehicle of light. I am still no better than a wretched mortal, and am forc'd to content myself with walks of turf or gravel, however ambitious you think me of setting my feet on the spangled pavement, and tracing the milky way. But still my imagination is unconfin'd, and makes many a gay excursion to the realms of day, wanders thro' the *Elysian* fields, and reclines beneath myrtle shades; where

On flow'rs repos'd, and with fresh flourets crown'd,

They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet,

Quaff immortality and joy secure.

But the soothing vision quickly takes its flight, the celestial scenes vanish, and, for an ethereal enlargement, I find myself limited to a den, a dwelling in the dust: Instead of feasting on ambrosia, and banquetting with angels, I am reduc'd to the common food of mortals; and, instead of the music of the spheres, am serenaded

with a ploughman's whistle, or some rustic shepherd's jovial roundelay. However, I have my share of tranquility in this stormy world. This low part of existence will soon be ended, and all beyond is refin'd and exalted happiness.

Adieu.



L E T T E R CXLIII.

To the same.

My dear Brother,

YOUR letter has given me a little relish for life and the world again, which I had intirely lost before. Whatever wild ambition craves, or boundless vanity can paint, the splendor of the great, and the pleasures of the libertine, had lost their enchanting appearances; while my gloomy imagination fancy'd my dearest brother expiring, and with him, all the charms that youth and blooming life could boast.

*The fairest flow'r (hard fate!) but blows and dies,
Does its gay honours to our eyes display,
And while we praise its beauty, sinks away.*

STRENGTH of reason, and fortitude of mind! what pompous words are these? but how little do they signify to a mind so unguarded and effeminate as mine? I have a concern for my dearest brother's life, which no argument can remove, nor any amusement divert; nothing but silent tears can relieve me. Heaven, who knows the secret idolatry of my heart, may, perhaps, remove the darling object, and blot every name, but what is divine, from my soul.

I WAS

I WAS going to pray for you, but, my dearest brother, I know not what blessings to ask: Not what would make you happy, that relate only to this world; let the ardor of my vows (and listening angels can witness how sincere they are) let them procure immortal pleasures for you, and I shall close my eyes in peace, and thank the propitious powers with my expiring breath. Adieu. If half my prayers reach the skies, you must, you will be happy.

MR. ——— has a softer proposal to make to you, but the truth of this appears

To none, but quick poetic eyes,

I COULD not fold up my letter, without inclosing Mr. Grove's ode on his recovery: The easy harmony of the numbers, and exalted piety of the sentiments, I'm sure, can't fail of pleasing you.

*On the AUTHOR'S Recovery out of
Sickness.*

Written, April, 1717.

THEE, bounteous author of my days,
Thee, their restorer, let me praise;
Thee, gracious God, who from the gates of death,
Where I in pensive silence fate,
Waiting the dread arrest of fate,
My soul didst save, and snatch my fleeting breath.

II.

My voice with weakness faint become,
 And hollow, like the empty tomb,
 Hoarse, and scarcely to be known;
 Strong, and animated grown,
 Shall be employ'd to sound thy fame:
 And while in loftier notes I laud that name,
 Which lately I invok'd with feeble cry,
 Rocks, hills, and vales, shall to my song reply.

III.

LET me remember too, with what surprize
 The sudden darkness veil'd my eyes.
 How sickly, and how pale the light,
 When death's impending shade,
 Prefage of everlasting night,
 Had round involv'd my head!
 To heav'n my languid looks I turn'd,
 Nor long my state unpity'd mourn'd;
 Celestial effluence purg'd the gloom away,
 And to my fainting eyes restor'd the day:
 Therefore for thee, my God, these orbs shall roll,
 And to thy radiant seat I'll dart, thro' them, my soul.

I.

THINK, vain, fond heart, when on the steep
 Of that tremendous, boundless deep,
 Eternity, in sad suspense I stood;
 How all my trifling hopes and fears,
 My senseless joys, and idle tears,
 Vanish'd at prospect of the frightful flood!

II.

SURE life is but a huddled dream,
 And time a swift, deceitful stream,
 This vain world a shining bubble,
 Only full of wind and trouble :
 Yet this, great God, this is the prize,
 For which deluded mortals heav'n despise ;
 Blinded with passion after this they run,
 And see not, 'till they see themselves undone.

III.

WHEN, Lord, thy hand the fable curtain drew,
 And future worlds disclos'd to view,
 These were my thoughts ; and such are still
 The lessons of the grave ;
 But as the purple channels fill,
 We gayer fancies have ;
 The world its former charms puts on,
 And we to doat again are won.
 But, rather than this shameful chace repeat,
 And grossly suffer, having seen the cheat,
 A stranger let me live to fatal ease,
 That greatness may not tempt, wealth shine, nor flattery
 please !

I.

RAIS'D from my bed, I'll higher rise,
 And springing upward, mate the skies,
 Nor shall this load of flesh restrain my flight :
 So, when the eagle's youth returns,
 With thirst of bold attempts he burns,
 Effays his wings, and tow'ring, mocks the fight.

II.

ALL my past follies be forgot,
 Lost in one universal blot:
 From this æra years begin
 Happy, and unstain'd with sin;
 And as if life did now commence,
 And nature's beauties now first struck my sense,
 Transported, let me sing from whom I came,
 Admire his works, and praise the faultless frame.

III.

MY soul, thou Source of life, with health inspire,
 And actuate it with thy fire;
 Let all its pow'rs partake the heat,
 Imparted by thy love;
 In all a heav'nly vigour beat
 Its ev'ry spring to move.
 If thus my body and my mind
 Shall both thy quick'ning influence find,
 With both thy glory I will strive to raise,
 And to thy service consecrate my days;
 And while this aims at heav'n, that bows to earth,
 Each part will honour Thee, and own its several birth.

I.

THO' now delay'd, yet death will come,
 By fate's inevitable doom;
 When once the destin'd period is mature,
 No pray'rs for respite will prevail,
 That mightiest engine then must fail,
 And the disease, we slight, despair of cure.

II.

SUN, stand thou still, a mortal said,
The mortal's voice the sun obey'd,
Sudden check'd his rapid wheel,
On the brow of heav'n's steep hill.

To double length he stretch'd that day ;
But then, impatient of his longer stay,
His fall he hasten'd, and withdrew the light :
So stopp'd awhile, my sun must set in night.

III.

WISELY the blessing use, thou must resign ;
The blessing will not long be thine ;
Prepare, my soul, for thy remove
From this frail house of clay,
To seats of fadeless bliss above,
And ever-during day.

Death shews not there his meagre face,
And grief's a stranger to the place.
No annals to record, as here, the time,
The blest preserve ; but ever in their prime,
Let countless ages glide away untold,
Which witness, as they pass, to joys that ne'er grow old.



LETTER CXLIV.

To the Rev. Mr. JOHN MUNCKLEY.

S I R,

THE confidence your letter gives me of my * brother's happiness, is all that can support me under the dismal tidings of his death: I bore the loss of my father with much more composure. The moment your letter came, I was pouring out all the ardor of my soul before God, for my brother's life, or a full assurance of his future happiness: The last your letter brought me. But, oh! could spending the day in tears, or the watches of the night in prayers; could my own life have rescu'd him from the grave, I would have given it. I believe he died on the same day my father did; and now they are met to part no more.

I TOLD my father, two days before he died, of my mother's distress, and that she desir'd his prayers; on which he lifted up his hands, and fixing his eyes earnestly toward heaven, spoke these words: *God Almighty bless her, and her family; bless them in their bodies, and bless them in their souls.* And, after a long and silent pause, he said again; *God is faithful, he has blest them, and they shall be blest.*

My father left all his estate to me by his will, without one legacy to any relation he had, and on the outside of his will he set down this as his reason; *that he might not straighten me, nor hinder any kindness that I should design to shew to Mr. Rowe's family.* This generous concern for them has oblig'd me beyond all the indulgence of his life.

* Mr. William Rowe.

I AM

I AM afraid this affliction sits heavy on my poor sister: But her brother's resemblance to my much-lov'd husband made him dear to me beyond all the ties of nature, and my grief knows no reason or limits.

I SHALL expect you here, according to your promise: If you are so inhuman as to disappoint me, it will be the first ill-natur'd thing I ever knew you guilty of; which will vastly aggravate your crime. I hope you intend to make some stay: You shall be sure of a sincere welcome to

Your, &c.

P. S. The anguish of my heart will not suffer me to write now to my mother.



L E T T E R CXLV.

To ———

I HAVE lately look'd over Mr. *Rowe's Lives of illustrious men*, and tho' one of the manuscripts is lost, (I need not tell you by whom) the principles and reflections in them are so just and noble, I can hardly with a safe conscience suffer them to be kept any longer from the world. You know Mr. *Rowe's* universal learning and exact judgment in every thing that was graceful and elegant in human nature or polite writing, and I am sure they were wrote with a design to be made public. However I leave it intirely to your discretion, to do as you think proper.

I WAS extremely surpriz'd at the news of Mrs. ———'s death. I begin to think I have liv'd too long,

long, and shall see every thing I value rent from me. 'Tis my greatest joy to think the shadows of the evening are lengthening, and that the closing part, the last important moment will soon arrive. O may my sun set in smiles!

*Lo! I behold the scatt'ring shades,
The dawn of heav'n appears,
The sweet immortal morning spreads
Its blushes round the spheres.*

MR. WATTS.

I AM aham'd to send you the following lines, but since 'tis in obedience to your request, you will excuse them. I have talk'd of dying so often, that I can't live much longer with a very good grace, and I ought in decency to make my exit, after I have so seriously bid adieu to the world.

*On the return of the day on which Mr. ROWE
died.*

*Unhappy day forever now adieu!
These eyes no more thy rising beams shall view;
Before the sun its annual course shall roll,
Immortal light shall open on my soul:
The years of paradise begin their round,
With lasting flow'rs and endless verdure crown'd,
In blissful climes where full delights abound.
No more, lov'd youth, the mournful muse no more
In melting numbers shall thy loss deplore;
To notes triumphant now I'll tune the lyre,
And sacred love shall all the song inspire.*

I HOPE you are all well, and happier than this vain world can make you.

LETTER

L E T T E R CXLVI.

To the same.

YOU have flatter'd me into a better opinion of the * *Letters* than I should ever have had, without your approbation. But oh! be it far from my soul, to ascribe any thing to myself, 'tis all receiv'd, and let it be sacred to the cause of virtue: If any language of mine has the power of persuasion, may it be devoted to the interest and glory of that great Fountain of all perfection, from whom all wisdom flows.

I DISCOVER so much original folly, such blindness and inadvertency, that I am fully convinc'd 'tis only the inspiration of the Almighty, that teaches man effectually to profit.

*O speak! and at the harmony
Of thy commanding voice,
My soul shall kindle into life,
And breathe immortal joys.*

*The soft insinuating calls
Of sense will all be drown'd
In the superior excellence
Of that celestial sound.*

*With deep attention lo! I stand,
Be the creation still,
While silently I wait to hear
The dictates of thy will.*

* *Friendship in death.*

O speak!

*O speak ! for who can teach like thee
 The uninstructed mind ?
 Whom thou wilt condescend to teach,
 Shall heav'nly wisdom find.*

LADY ——— from the first reading was positive the *Letters* were mine, but I make no serious reply. I have not sent one present as the author, and as I make no confession, but to three or four persons to whom I could not help it, I still entertain some faint hopes, and sincerely desire, I may not be known. I resolve to guard against denying the truth ; however I have no obligation to disclose the secret, but rather say nothing. But I make a very awkward business of it, when ask'd, to avoid telling a lye, or owning the truth. By Mrs. ———'s letters, I fancy she thinks you the author : You need neither own, nor deny any thing, but refuse to answer. Dr. *Young*, I flatter myself, is in perfect ignorance. I could wish I had trusted nobody but you in the publication. But such a reflection is inconsistent with my principles. I believe the minutest circumstances (except sins) are ordain'd by him, by whom the least sparrow is not forgotten, nor the hairs of our head unnumbered.

I WOULD not entertain so ill an opinion of human nature (however atheists and free-thinkers have degraded it) as to believe it impossible to reach a disinterested love and benevolence to mankind. But I have not the vanity to pretend to the heights of charity, and that I had no other motive in writing the *Letters* ; yet 'twas, I think, my principal view, remote from any hopes of interest or personal reputation. It would indeed have been some little entertainment to me, to hear myself freely censur'd or approv'd, without any other concern than that of an author in masquerade. However (if I am detected) at worst, I hope I cannot be accus'd of vanity,

nity, as I have never assum'd the title of an author, nor presum'd to speak, but in a personated character.

If you send one to Mr. ———, let it be from yourself, and tell him nobody owns the book, and the author has no existence.

I AM with all imaginable sincerity

Your, &c.



L E T T E R CXLVII.

To the same.

THERE cannot be a more proper name for all the enjoyments of this world, than that of shadows: Thus they fly away, and leave no traces behind them; or if they leave any, perhaps, 'tis guilt and regret, at the reflection on time and advantages lost and unimprov'd. However I am highly indebted to Lady ———, who was so obliging to come and stay here two nights. She fill'd the flying moments with wit and good-humour, and laying aside the Countess of ———, and all manner of ceremony, gave us no anxiety or trouble, but seem'd to have a perfect relish of the ease and tranquility of low life. I have just receiv'd a letter, that she is got well to *Marlborough*, and says she will raise her hearths and windows, to make her house look like mine.

BUT in all enjoyments, your danger hangs like the weight of death on my soul. All my earthly happiness seems in suspense by the uncertainty of your health. I cannot express the tenderness of my affection for you,

'tis

'tis the strongest engagement my heart feels to the world.
O may that sovereign Power who has the springs of nature in his hands, spare your life, and crown it with distinguish'd favours!

BUT however that is determin'd, some of the watches of this night have been employ'd to beg that your evidences for immortal happiness may be clear and unquestion'd, that the God of all consolation would make his goodness pass before you, and on this side heaven, let out one ray of that glory, which (I speak it with full assurance) will open in all its splendor on you forever, when you have once pass'd the gloomy shades of death. O may you be refresh'd, here below, with the foretastes of those rivers of pleasure, of which you will be swallow'd up, in the region of perpetual joy!

I HAVE more reason to fear the great event than you can have, and yet my hopes are often supported by such thoughts as these, to which I know you will sincerely assent.

' LET me serve my God, tho' that service should never find a reward. Let me love thee, if that love should never meet a return. Let me employ my life for thy glory, tho' I am forgotten forever. I would spend my hours of mortal life with thee, if I must part with thee, in that to come. If I should never see the open glory of thy face in heaven, I will catch every glimmering ray that discovers thee on earth. Shouldst thou exclude me from the general assembly of the church of the first-born above, yet I will love the habitation of thy holiness here, and frequent the place where thy honour dwells.'

How much do I value your prayers to prepare me for that solemn part which I may be soon call'd to act! It is a great satisfaction to my mind, to imagine that while I have been asking blessings at the throne of mercy for

for you, perhaps, at the same instant, you have been imploring the Almighty for me, that we may meet in the seats of immortal life and pleasure above, and tell to listening angels the wonders of redeeming grace to worthless, sinful mortals: The charming relation will never end, and the miracles of boundless clemency be forever surprizing and new.

*Here is my triumph, here my hopes run high;
They know no bound, but infinitely free,
Grasp all a blest eternity contains.*

ASSURE yourself I shall be to the last moments of my life, and beyond mortality,

Your, &c.



LETTER CXLVIII.

To the same.

TIS a great satisfaction to me, to find your life is still continu'd, and that there are some smiling hopes of your recovery to your former degree of health. Is any thing difficult to the almighty Power? I would fain flatter myself with the happiness of seeing you once more, on this side the stars. And yet there seems something impious in such a desire: For while I am persuaded it would be infinitely for your own advantage, to get free from corruption and mortality, why should I envy you a state of complete felicity, if indulgent Heaven should call you away early from these regions of sin and disorder? For I make no question but death will conduct you safely to the possession of immortal

immortal joys: And I am not without some serene expectations myself, and am almost assur'd we shall meet in the triumph of celestial blessedness and perfection in the next world:

*Where pleasure rolls its living flood,
From sin and dross refin'd.*

DR. WATTS.

IF Heaven should restore you to the prayers of your friends, and my, perhaps, too importunate desires, I need not say, you would be welcome as the light of the sun to one who had long lost it: If not, may the light of his countenance, whose loving-kindness is better than life, shine with unclouded glories on your soul, and scatter the shades before you.

I FORGOT to tell you, Lady Scudamore died with great composure: And tho' she was seiz'd in such a crisis of affairs, as would have engag'd a mind less pious than hers, she was intirely resign'd and calm; having nothing to do, but to give up her soul to the hands of that Redeemer whose name she had confess'd and ador'd. Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like many of my pious friends, whose exit has been celestial peace!

ADIEU, may the almighty God be your portion!

YOU will excuse the short unstudy'd soliloquy, I have inclos'd.

To him that lov'd, and wash'd me in his blood,
Who with that precious ransom bought my soul,
My captive soul, from guilt, from death and hell;
From me, and all the favour'd race of man,
From ev'ry tribe and tongue on earth redeem'd,
To him be praise, dominion glory, pow'r!

O WHEN

O WHEN shall I begin the endless song,
 Th' immortal strain, and to the golden harps
 Of angels set the blest Redeemer's name?
 When shall I celebrate the boundless praise
 Of everlasting love? Survey the lengths,
 The dazzling heights, the wide-extended breadths,
 And still unfathom'd depths of grace divine?
 When shall I with immortal rapture gaze
 On God's unclouded face? See the bright smile
 Of uncreated, ever-blooming beauty,
 The fair original of all the charms
 That here below subdu'd my captive sense?
 O when shall I in peace behold thy face,
 That face, whose rays shall dissipate the cloud
 Of mortal guilt and grief? O haste away,
 Thou blissful period! fly, ye lagging hours!
 Impatience racks my soul at your delay.



L E T T E R CXLIX.

To the same.

YOU must give me leave, my dear friend, to indulge myself in the pleasure of writing to you, since I do it without the least expectation of a return; and indeed I would deny myself this satisfaction, if I thought it would be troublesome to you.

YOUR long silence and confinement make me look on you like an inhabitant of some superior region, and I
 want

want to talk to you in the language of immortality. But since that cannot be, I must be content to tell you in a human dialect, how much satisfaction I should promise myself in your conversation, if it was the will of Heaven to restore you to health: The visit of some gentle celestial inhabitant would not be more welcome. Indeed I can't but flatter myself with prospects of distant happiness, after so many instances of the vanity of human hopes: And yet 'tis with some caution that I renew the pleasing expectation of your perfect recovery, and that your health will be enough confirm'd, to suffer you once more to spend a summer in the country, if Heaven continues my life, which I hope will find a period long before you remove to the skies. 'Tis a pleasure to me to imagine, I shall greet you a new-come stranger to the immaterial worlds, whose wonders I shall be well acquainted with, before you make your first appearance there.

BUT oh! you will there find no greater instance of the power of almighty grace and clemency, than will appear in my salvation.

*Great is thy mercy, and my tongue
Shall its rich wonders tell;
For thou hast sav'd my sinking soul
From the low depths of hell.*

DR. WATTS.

How often do I look back on the snares I have escap'd, and thro' all the changes of my life see the dazzling memorials of providential goodness, and the humbling instances of my own guilt! and yet with its highest aggravations, I hope my pardon and a full remission is seal'd in heav'n; and there are moments, in which (against all the contradiction of hell) I dare attest, that *in the Lord my Redeemer I have righteousness and strength.*

It is not possible for me to describe what friendly anguish my soul feels for you : Nothing relieves those cares but the prospect of meeting you in an happy immortality ; and be assur'd, that next to my own salvation, the most ardent wishes I can make to Heaven, will be for your happiness. Adieu, and may you enjoy the light of his countenance, in whose presence is fulness of joy and pleasures forevermore. May the God of your pious ancestors bless you, and make your ways prosperous. May your hopes of glory brighten into the clearest evidence, and support you with unutterable consolations.



LETTER CL.

To the Rev. Mr. THO. AMORY.

Dec. 10.

IT would be putting you on an exploit of perfect knight errantry, to desire you to take a journey hither, in this unpleasant season. You would find occasion to equip yourself with *Mambrino's* helmet, to defend your head from the inclemency of the wintry skies. As for Mr. *Grove*, if he should come on victorious over all the giants and enchanted castles on the road ; if it should happen to snow while he was here, he would fancy himself in *Lapland*, and abhor this place forever. I am so sincerely pleas'd with Mr. *Grove's* company, that I would never desire it, 'till I thought every circumstance would concur to please the delicacy of his imagination, on which I know the weather has some influence. I would never invite him, but when the sun smiles on the gay creation,

Restores

*Restores their leafy honours to the woods,
Flow'rs to the banks, and freedom to the floods ;
While birds on branches perch'd, or on the wing,
At nature's joyful restoration sing.*

For this, and two or three other wise reasons, I am willing to deny myself the happiness of your company 'till a month or two after *Christmas*.

I FIND I have your leave to make my exit, and commence immortality as soon as I please, on condition I'll study divinity in the fields of light, and come back again to fright people out of their wits, and answer cases of conscience : But I am afraid my improvements will not be great this way. I am for the myrtle shades and rosy bowers ; and if a silver lute and a celestial song will entertain you, I'll certainly oblige you, if it is in my power, with such melting strains as angels sing to dying saints, when they would give them a taste of celestial joys :

*Such notes as echo thro' the blissful groves,
When they describe their own immortal loves.*



L E T T E R C L I.

To the same.

S I R,

I HAVE been reading all this morning of the sun, and stars, and comets ; but I can't be so vain to tell you I understood perfectly one line that I read : Yet the subject has given a sort of elevation to my thoughts,
and

and put them in such a kind of dazzling confusion, that I'm afraid you'll wish I had writ to you, when my genius had been less exalted, and more turn'd to earthly objects. But you may be out of pain, for I find conversing with mortal things has a pernicious influence; I am already descended, and have bid the starry regions adieu. Without raillery, 'tis too true, that the mind does not long keep its heavenly, which is, indeed, its proper situation, and where alone it can find rest.

I SPENT a few days, since you was here, at *Longleat*; but tho' the gardens were in their perfect order and beauty, and look'd like paradise restor'd, I found greater charms in obscurity and solitude; which I think I should prefer to a public life, if 'twas on no other view than as a sanctuary from the censure of the world, and to be disingag'd from its interests and passions. An unenvy'd retirement, without standing a competitor for any of the advantages that the rest of mankind pursue, seems to be the nearest way to peace and happiness.—Like *Sancho*, in *Don John*, I can't reason long without interruption.

I am, &c.



LETTER CLII.

To the same.

S I R,

YOU have addrest me with as much solemnity, as if I had been in holy orders. You certainly fancy'd yourself writing to Mrs. *Drummond*; while you know I am so far from assuming those superior airs, that I have hardly the confidence to put myself in the class

class of reasonable creatures. All the pre-eminence I pretend to, is that I came into the world before you; and, according to the propriety of time and action, hope to leave it first, and commence the dignity of a celestial spirit; while you are left below, a sober plodding mortal, blessing yourself in the felicity of a prudent wife, and a house full of pretty, tractable children.

YOUR verses contain excellent rules for happiness; but you find they had not their just effect on your fair disciple. One would really think mankind under some fatal enchantment, that they are resolv'd never to be happy by rule or method; while, as Mr. Grove says,

*Heav'n warns us of the dang'rous road,
And would our steps recall;
But we must tread, where crouds have trod,
And where they fell, we fall.*

Mr. Pope says justly enough, in his letters, that half the things that employ our heads deserve not the name of thoughts; they are rather stronger dreams, impressions on the imagination.—But I have no inclination to be severe on human nature, and have still the modesty to put myself in the lowest rank among intellectual beings, and pretend to no right to censure or dictate.

I AM impatient to see your sermon; the * title has already byass'd me in its favour. I always have thought you warm in the cause of Christianity; and for your peculiar notions, I am so far from blaming your frankness and sincerity, that it appears to me a beauty in your character.

* *Christ the Light of the World: Or, the principal Improvements made in Religion by Christianity.* A Sermon preach'd at Exon, Sept. 11, 1735.

BEFORE

BEFORE I had finish'd my letter, your sermon came to my hands ; which I have read with great satisfaction ; and from an implicit believer, it has half made me a reasonable one ; which you will think, is a surprising attainment for

Your, &c.



L E T T E R CLIII.

To ———.

I WOULD fain persuade you, and flatter myself, that my inclinations to solitude are not the effect of any sour austerity, or vain ambition of being thought wiser or better than other people. I aspire to no character above that of a reasonable creature ; and am content to keep on a level with other indolent mortals, who are willing to be quiet and happy, on the most easy terms they can find.

'Tis impossible for me to keep my mind in a proper situation in the noise and hurry of public diversions. A train of impertinent images, a succession of follies, runs thro' my imagination. My head is a perfect toy-shop, a *Raree-show* ; nor can I possibly banish from my memory a series of troublesome ideas of things to which I am wholly indifferent whether they ever had an existence. But 'till the impression is a little effac'd by retirement, these unseasonable vanities will intrude on my public and private devotions.

FREQUENTING assemblies of pleasure would not be the way, as you imagine, to reconcile me to a crowd,

unless I could find more sincerity practis'd there. People seem, indeed, to meet with an obliging design to please and entertain one another, and you would think the whole world in a league of friendship and beneficent offices; but as soon as ever they are parted, the disguise falls off, and the latent malignity breaks out in slander or ridicule. Whatever pains has been taken by every single person to recommend themselves by dress, behaviour, or wit, not one mortal comes away satisfy'd with any thing but himself. One has been too pert, another too sullen; some are awkward, others hideous; some too old, and others too young; and nothing in nature what it should be; not a beauty or blemish, that escapes censure: So that you would think mankind born in a state of hostility with one another, and that the end of those public assemblies was to pry into the faults, and expose the defects of their own species.

My letter is of a decent length.

Adieu.



L E T T E R CLIV.

To Mrs. ARABELLA MARROW.

MADAM,

I FIND 'tis a hard thing for people that are quite out of the world, to converse with those that are in it. As I am cut off from the ways of the living, and seem to exist in the state of departed spirits, I know not how to entertain my surviving friends. News from the dead, I fancy, would not be very agreeable to many of them; especially to those that are very well at ease in a state

of

of mortality, and have all the gay part of life before them. But ah! Madam, how soon will the soft deluding vision fly! how swiftly will the circling years roll on, and convince you of the vanity of all your expectations from this false world! You'll think I am very well at leisure, to utter these wise maxims: I don't expect you to believe me, but upon your own experience.

I THINK myself very happy, that I have writ any thing capable of inspiring such noble sentiments as those of devotion must be, in a mind form'd like Mrs. *Knightly's*. I find, Madam, you are a little piqu'd, that I should think you have no relish, but *pour les poesies tendres & galantes*. Why, to tell you the truth, Madam, I fancy people are never wise or devout in any remarkable degree, 'till they are married; and when once you are entered into that sober solemn state, I shall have the same charity for you, that I have for other people under those grave circumstances.

As for all the fine things you say of my wit and merit, take it for granted I subscribe to them all, and give my full assent to them, and every thing else that can be said to my advantage. I am extremely sensible what a loss my retreat is to the world, and how much a person of my consequence must be miss'd in it. I am afraid the grass will cover the circle in *Hyde-park*, if I should not make my appearance there; and if a tender despair had not turn'd me savage, I should certainly have more compassion for mankind, than to hide so much merit in the country shades. But wherever I am, such worth as yours will still possess the esteem of

Your, &c.

LETTER CLV.

To the same.

MY past life begins to appear like a dream to me. 'Tis so long since I saw any of my friends, that I almost fancy I never had any thing but a visionary scene of happiness; and I think of Mrs. *Arabella Marrow* only as an agreeable phantom, that once or twice appear'd to me between sleeping and waking, and (as the visits of angels are short) the gay delusion smil'd, and vanish'd forever from my sight.

BUT if you are really an inhabitant of this world, I believe, by this time, you are pretty well tir'd of the town, and I expect in your next, an account of your retreat. There is so little variety in life, and the repetition is so dull, that I am always pitying people that have a long scene to act, and envying those that in a few years finish their part, and retire.

WHEN I writ to you last, I had resolv'd to go to *Bath*; but after I had nicely balanc'd the pleasure and the pain, I resolv'd to bid my agreeable friends adieu, and break my engagements with every earthly thing. In this humour I can't but repeat with constant pleasure the soliloquy of *Alcibiades*, in the *Spectator*; and then, methinks, my soul acquires a sort of self-sufficiency and independence.

I'LL just invoke the muses to touch the lyre in blank verse, and leave you to solace yourself at *Piquet* or *Ombre*.

*Appear, ye fairest blandishments of sense,
With all your boasted charms, at once display
Whate'er the sun's bright eye, in all his round,*

Since

*Since first he journey'd thro' the skies, has seen :
 Ye beauties turn'd to dust, ye triumphs lost
 In long oblivion, put on airy forms,
 And in fantastic grandeur now appear,
 That I, at once, may all your charms despise.*

You find I am got above the clouds, and so I leave you. I hope, from this elevation, you'll take it as a great favour, if I subscribe myself

Your, &c.



LETTER CLVI.

To the same.

MADAM,

I HOPE this letter will find you in some interval of perfect leisure, or else I cannot expect your forgiveness for so much wilful and deliberate impertinence. My thoughts are in such a romantic situation in this place, that I am half convinc'd that every thing I see here is enchantment. I never venture out of my own apartment, with any security of returning to it again, but lose myself in verdant labyrinths and flowery mazes; and am often reduc'd to inquire of the first intelligent being that I meet, which is the way into my Lord ——'s house. But 'tis my consolation, that this gay confusion of mind is not peculiar to myself; for I can assure you, there are not two people in the family that are yet agreed to call any one thing, besides the mount, by the same name. What one reasonable creature thinks fit to call a parterre, another, with a true poetical licence,

calls a wilderness; that which one, without the least hesitation, terms a green and open square, another, with full assurance, affirms to be a close impenetrable shade, a retreat from the noon-day sun. Amidst this confusion of languages, 'tis a great delight to me, to find every body in as visionary a disposition as myself. Whether we are got into fairy land, or if 'tis the nature of this climate that has lull'd us all into a golden dream, is very uncertain; but for my part, I am so pleas'd with the place and company, that I am willing to indulge the charming madness, without envying the most sedate reasoner on earth. But whether you'll take my word or not, 'tis certain I am in my right senses, when I subscribe myself

Your, &c.



LETTER CLVII.

To the same.

MADAM,

I THINK myself very happy in your good opinion; but tho' I do the utmost justice to my own merit, I can't flatter myself that I deserve your esteem — This sentence looks as if it was borrow'd out of the *Academy of Compliments*; but, without vanity, I can assure you 'tis my own.

THE news of your illness is a very sensible affliction to me; I find my letters are not the only *Memento's* you have of mortality. With regard to yourself, I think it could be no great disadvantage to you, to quit the world so early. To die in the pride of life, and in all
the

the splendor of youthful virtue, has something more glorious in it, than to languish out the dregs of life, in the exercise of no virtue but patience. But as you have all the gay part of life before you, and have some soft engagement to this world, I am not surpriz'd at the reluctance you find to make such an early exit.

You would think me too resign'd in parting with my friends, if I should tell you, it is not worth your while to make a farther trial of any earthly enjoyment: However your own experience will be the strongest conviction, and a few circling years will give you a full demonstration of the vanity of all your gay expectations from this false world. Indeed, I would have you disappointed, and can't wish you perfectly happy and at rest here; not from any ill-will or malignity in my temper, but for fear it should stop your pursuit after more lasting and superior joys.

If I appear more stoical than I ought on this occasion, 'tis because I apprehend you are in no danger; and I hope to leave you long behind me, possess'd of as much happiness as dreams and shadows can give you.

Adieu.



L E T T E R , CLVIII.

To the same.

MADAM,

I AM extremely oblig'd to you, for the account of your travels. A view of those fine prospects in your description, is much more agreeable to my tem-

M 4

per,

per, than being at the pains of seeing them any other way; while I am persuaded your images of them are more beautiful and entertaining than the things you describe.

My Lady ——— has given me an account of Mr. ———'s death. She speaks of it in a manner that gives me the highest esteem for her virtue, and the humanity of her temper: To make such just reflections on life and its vanities, in the pride of youth, and gayest circumstance of fortune, is very uncommon. But nothing gives me a greater opinion of her wit, and the elegance of her taste, than the value she has for your conversation. You know I am very sincere; as I have no dependence, I am past all ceremony with the world. Since Mr. *Rowe's* death, I have had neither hopes nor fears; but am in a state of absolute indifference with regard to the events of this world. I have ease and plenty to the extent of my wishes, and can form no desires but what my father's indulgence would procure; and I have nothing to ask of Heaven beyond the good old man's life. The perfect sanctity of his character, with the benevolence of his temper, makes him a refuge to the widow and fatherless. The people follow him with their blessings and prayers, when he goes abroad; which he seldom does, but with a design to reconcile some difference, or to right the injured and oppress'd. The rest of his hours are intirely spent in his private devotion, or books, which are his only diversions. But I forget myself, and acknowledge, it would be more a-propos to entertain you with the charms of some handsome young fellow, or the dress and equipage of a beau, than with the moral virtues and temperance of hermits and philosophers.

LADY ——— tells me you are in a constant hurry of company in *Warwickshire*. I suppose you do not know that you deserve my compassion; but I can't help bestowing it upon you. With all the graces of your person,

person, the charms of your wit and address, or all besides that mortality can boast, I would not be in your circumstances. O rather

Bear me, some god, to Hæmus' dewy top,

or to mount *Atlas*, or to the wilds of *Africa*, or any other savage wilderness on earth! O bear me

Far from the noisy follies of the great,

The tiresome farce of ceremonious state,

Far from the thoughtless crowd, who laugh, and play,

And dance, and sing, impertinently gay,

Their short, inestimable hours away!

IN the humour I am now indulging, you will certainly think a desert the most proper place for

Your, &c.



LETTER CLIX.

To Mrs. ARABELLA MARROW.

To be deliver'd to her after my decease.

HOW lasting are the ties of reason and virtue! I expect to breathe but a few days longer, or at utmost, but a few weeks, and in dying, give you this testimony of my friendship: A friendship, that I am not ashamed to carry with me into the sacred regions of light and love. Had my affection been founded on any

M 5

thing

L E T T E R CLX.

To Mrs. ———.

MADAM,

MY satisfactions in this world are confin'd to very narrow limits; and as your letters and essays are among those few entertainments, I can't but complain, that you will not let me see the paper you promis'd to send.

THE melancholy account you gave in your last letter, of the ill state of your health, gives me a great solicitude for you; tho' I am convinc'd it yields you a serene and pleasant prospect. I never recall your retir'd conversation, in some of the charming walks at ———, without fancying myself, in that moment, wiser and happier than before; but I date not promise myself a return of those satisfactions, 'till we meet in the ever-blooming fields of paradise.

————— *The blissful plains,
Where pleasure in its gayest triumph reigns.
Joys ever-young, unmix'd with pain or fear,
Fill the wide circle of th' eternal year.
Stern winter smiles on that auspicious clime,
The fields are florid with unfading prime.
From the bleak pole no winds inclement blow,
Mold the round hail, or flake the fleecy snow:
But from the breezy deep the blest inhale
The fragrant murmurs of the western gale.
The firmament with living splendors glows,
And on immortal thrones the blest repose.*

This description I borrow'd from Mr. Pope; and this gay scheme is, I believe, suited to your taste, tho' I am afraid

afraid it would not be at all agreeable to the reverend Mr. ———'s sagacity; to whom I beg you will give my service. I confess, these flowery scenes seem to be the least circumstances of immortal bliss: But in what its greatest elevation consists, never enter'd into the heart of man to conceive.

*Make haste, ye ling'ring hours,
To bring the promis'd joy!*

THERE is no spell confines me to this place, but the brevity of human life; which would have made me content, on whatever spot of earth destiny had dropt me. I could never have been plac'd in a more vacant situation, without any thing to please, or molest me; which in the conclusion of life is a great advantage. My principal concern is now, that I may pass the fatal darkness without consternation.

I AM ignorant whether heavenly, or earthly love is at present your governing passion; if the last, this grave subject may perhaps come unseasonably, and the long life of the happy antediluvians might have been a more agreeable theme.

I am, &c.



LETTER CLXI.

To Mrs. ———.

YOU observe very justly, religion does instruct mankind to act a becoming part in every period of human life; but still piety looks like a retreat for declining

declining years, and people seem to be reduc'd to it, as a sanctuary; goodness then has an air of necessity, and does not appear half so free and voluntary, as in the bloom of life. And this, Madam, is the happy season you have chosen to recommend the sacred dictates of Christianity, while the spirit and gracefulness of youth sets off every virtue. Be it easy or severe, 'tis still becoming, and attracts the spectator's love and imitation; it strikes the senses as well as the soul. The heavenly flame mingles with the lustre of the eyes, and makes itself visible in the vivacity of a youthful face. The sanctity of thought reveals itself in the modest aspect, the guileless and unaffected smile. The mind, conscious of nothing but good-will and gentle dispositions, gives the signal of its beneficence by a thousand nameless graces peculiar to the advantage of youth and blooming life.

I HAVE made your compliments to Mrs. ———, and obey'd your commands, in recommending Bishop *Hopkins's* sermons to her; but to no more purpose, than if I had persuaded her to peruse a treatise of navigation. She thinks it a greater toil to read twenty sermons, than *Alexander* would have had to conquer twenty worlds, if he had known where to find them. A folio of divinity is certainly a dead weight in a fine lady's hands, and much more heavy and unmanageable than *Clelia*, or any other romance of the same bulk.

I am, &c.

LETTER CLXII.

To Mr. ———.

S I R,

YOU are too partial to my writings of any kind, and I am afraid my letters will soon convince you how much you have deceiv'd yourself, in the value you seem to set on my correspondence. My way of life is so retir'd, that I am ignorant of every thing that passes in the busy world, and can inform my friends of no events nor changes, but what occur in the rural scenes and the variety of nature. If I live 'till *December*, I may be able to inform you that the waters are turn'd to ice; or in *April*, that the ground is cover'd with cow-slips and daisies: But I am not positive that this important intelligence will very much improve or divert you.

PERSONS of the greatest merit are generally most diffident of themselves. There can be no other reason for your anxiety in writing to me. Criticism is not my talent, nor inclination; and I am pleas'd that you remember any part of my conversation, that had a tendency to clear me from the imputation of such a disagreeable character. The beauties of temper and action in human life, delight and charm me; while its blemishes give me a very mortifying prospect, especially when I consider myself liable to the same follies.

YOUR commands to me to write a long letter are very obliging; but 'tis a happiness for you, as well as the rest of my correspondents, that my impertinence is limited by the size of my paper to pretty narrow bounds; and that 'tis as great a fatigue to me to write a long letter, as it would be to you to read it.

I am, &c.

LETTER CLXIII.

To the same.

S I R,

I HAVE an inclination to write to you, and yet I could not have chosen a more unlucky interval. My head seems perfectly vacant, without either bright or gloomy ideas, void of hopes or fears. This seems to be an unhappy, and is perhaps a criminal insensibility; and I often lament it as one of the miseries of mortality, that the mind can remain in such an indolence, in the view of things of eternal consequence, unmov'd at the uncertainty of future happiness, or misery; while the important hour is advancing, that must decide this grand event.

I HOPE you are, before this, perfectly recover'd from your indisposition. I have a real sympathy with Mrs. ———, for the concern your disorder must give her; tho', with regard to yourself, death can have nothing threatening or gloomy; and such early piety as yours, generally, makes a graceful exit, whatever loss the public suffers by it. But I hope your life will long be continu'd an example of virtue to an impious age.

YOU have favour'd me with the most agreeable employment in the world, to convey your generosity to Mr. ———. There is an exquisite pleasure in softening the cares and supplying the necessities of a person of merit; and still the joy is heighten'd, in raising a thought of gratitude in a pious mind to the Supreme Benefactor: Nor can I help asking with a tender surprise, why am I free and independent, while one of so much greater virtue is straiten'd and depress'd?

*But who shall ask th' Eternal Ruler, why
His favours thus unmerited are plac'd?*

MRS. ———'s invitation and care for my reception is exceeding obliging ; but nothing is more uncertain than my being in town. I have such an aversion to every thing that looks like fatigue, and find in myself such a propensity to indulge the tranquility of my temper, that 'tis a thousand to one, if I stir from the place where I am.

A THOUSAND blessings attend you !

I am, &c.



LETTER CLXIV.

To the same.

S I R,

I HAVE felt your affliction with all the tenderness and sympathy of friendship, and am equally affected with joy, at the news of Mrs. ———'s recovery. I hope she will long be a blessing to you, and a bright example of virtue, in this dissolute age ; where diversion and a giddy round of amusement, seem to banish every thing that is serious or rational. But satire is not my talent. I am conscious of too many follies of my own, to set up for a censurer of the manners of the age. However, I can't say you have strain'd your charity, in believing that I had rather hear the music of the spheres, than *Farinelli's Cantata's* ; and that, of the two, I had rather be among the angels, than crowded with the peers and peeresses of *Great Britain*, admiring Mrs. *Porter's* graceful action.

'Tis not a very easy transition from Mrs. *Porter* to Dr. *Watts* ; but I am sincerely glad of his recovery ;
but

but my tranquility will not be complete, 'till I hear from you, that Mrs. ——— is past danger of a relapse; and confirm'd in her health.

*May blooming health still smile upon her face,
And all the joys that sacred virtue gives,
Brighten her mind, and crown her future years!*

You need not make an excuse for sending a speedy answer to any of my letters; it will always be an obligation. Whatever liberties I take, I would not corrupt other people by the example of my indolence.

I FIND I have a little cramped my genius, for want of room; but next time you shall have more white paper, if nothing else.



LETTER CLXV.

To the same.

S I R,

YOUR good opinion, instead of raising my vanity, gives me a secret confusion; while I reflect how little I deserve it. Were my mind in that superior situation you imagine, I should be very happy; but your letter (in the most polite manner) rather tells me what I ought to be, than what I really am; and I hope I shall make that use of it: Tho', as Dr. *Watts* says, pride, that active iniquity, is never at rest; whether I have to do with God or man, it besets me on every side.

HOWEVER agreeable a retir'd life may be to your taste, a person of your good sense and piety will be
more

more profitable to the public by an active life. Examples of truth and justice are too rare, to wish them conceal'd in an idle retirement.

BE pleas'd to make my compliments to Mrs. ———, and tell her, my being in town is uncertain; but if I am, and have power to follow my inclinations, I shall spend some part of my time with her: Some gentle and friendly impulse flatters me with a great deal of pleasure in her conversation. But I would forbid myself expecting any perfect enjoyment either from society or solitude. At a distance, the sylvan shades seem to be the residence of innocence and peace; but in this degenerate state, guilt and folly will intrude on the most retir'd manner of life. And yet I must own, if there is any happiness below the stars, it consists in a freedom from the hurry and censure of the world, where the mind may devote all its bright and serene intervals to Heaven.

*How happy is the holy hermit's lot !
The world forgetting, by the world forgot.
Eternal sun-shine of the spotless mind !
Each pray'r accepted, and each wish resign'd ;
Desires compos'd, affections ever even,
Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heaven.
O grace divine ! O virtue heav'nly fair !
Divine oblivion of low-thoughted care !
Fresh-blooming hope, gay daughter of the sky !
And faith, our early immortality !
Enter each mild, each amicable guest :
Receive and wrap me in eternal rest !*

THESE lines are borrow'd from Mr. Pope, and I wish I was sensible of their energy, while I repeat them; but I am afraid these thoughts are rather flights of poetry than devotion.

You

You need not excuse your want of method ; your fine turn of thought, and easy manner of expression, is vastly preferable to all the pedantry of rules.

I am, &c.



LETTER CLXVI.

To the same.

S I R,

THE news your letter brought me of your safe return to your family, gave me a sincere satisfaction, both on your own account, and Mrs. ———'s, whom I often remember'd with anxiety and compassion, considering how the roads were infested with robbers. I look on your safety as the peculiar care of providence.

'Tis a sort of mortification to me, to delay writing to you a few posts ; but I am unwilling you should command too much of my attention ; for after I have writ, I am impatient for an answer. Your friendship seems to make a part of my happiness ; but 'tis a happiness so refin'd, that I hope it will be immortal. However, I must humble your vanity so far, as to let you know, I am talking the same language to Mrs. ———, that I am dictating to you. Be pleas'd to present her with my acknowledgments for the pleasure her society gave me : I am perfectly charm'd with her character.

MAY Heaven assent to your pious wishes for me ; and grant that I, the least of all saints, may at the last
summons

summons spring triumphant from my dusty bed, and be
number'd with the glittering assembly!

*There let we vie with all the host,
In duty and in bliss;
While less than nothing I shall boast,
And vanity confess.*

DR. WATTS.

THIS ought always to be in my view; and if you knew the natural vanity of my temper, you would not say so many fine things that might indulge it. However, I would be on my guard, and desire to make no use of the partiality of my friends, but the interest of religion, and the glory of my Redeemer.

I return you my thanks for the sermons you sent me; they are worthy of Dr. Watts's excellent pen. I have just read the *Essay on Reason*; 'tis writ by Mr. Harte, and is very fine. Mr. Pope's *Satire on Women* is more mild than I expected; and if well us'd, may reform the sex.

I must bid you adieu; it will be prudence in me to manage my stock of thought, that you may not discover the inward vacancy too soon.

MAY attending angels conduct you in the sacred paths of peace and virtue!

LETTER

LETTER CLXVII.

To the same.

WHEN I consider life, 'tis all a cheat,
 Yet, fool'd with hope, men favour the deceit,
 Trust on, and think to-morrow will repay;
 To-morrow's falser than the former day,
 Lyes more, and when it says we shall be blest
 With some new joy, cuts off what we possess.

Mr. DRYDEN.

THIS is the picture of human life; when we view it without a connexion to the next permanent scene, past and future pleasures have but an imaginary being. I have been taking some pains to reason myself into a state of indolence, and endeavouring to put a full period to all expectation of happiness below the stars. All that deserves the name of happiness on earth, is that friendly impression, which real merit makes on virtuous minds; but that stamp is immortal, and will reach perfection in the blissful regions above.

YOUR poetical description has set the beauties of nature in a full prospect before my imagination. I am glad you met with such variety of romantic scenes in your rambles; but the brightest appearances in nature cannot excite my envy, or raise my curiosity.

*By what I've liv'd, I plainly know
 The total sum of all below.*

WERE

WERE I permitted to make my tour among the starry worlds, I should leave you very gladly to make the best of whatever enjoyment the sea or dry land could give you.

DON'T ask me to meet you at *Oxford*, that you may spare me the pain of a refusal; which will be more tormenting to myself than to you.



ORIGINAL

P O E M S,

A N D

TRANSLATIONS.

B Y

Mr. THOMAS ROWE.

— *Non haec sunt edita ab illo ;
Sed quasi de domini funere rapta sui.
Quicquid in his igitur vitii rude carmen habebit,
Emendaturus, si licuisset, erat.* Ovid.



L O N D O N :

Printed in the Year MDCCXLIX.



Verſes to the memory of
Mr. THOMAS ROWE.

*Occaſioned by Mr. Rowe's Lives being tranſlated into French by the learned Abbe Bel-
lenger, and publiſhed at Paris and Amſter-
dam with Monsieur Dacier's tranſlation of
Plutarch.*

*Nunquam ego, te vitâ frater amabilior,
Aſpiciam poſthac? at certè ſemper amabo,
Semper mæſta tuâ carmina morte legam.*

CATULL.

O FRIEND! O brother! can thy dear-lov'd name
Riſe to my view, nor pious ſorrow claim?
O early fled to thy congenial ſkies,
E'er I could know thy matchleſs worth to prize!
Now ripen'd judgment gives that worth to ſee,
And next a father loſt, I mourn for thee;
For thee, whoſe friendſhip had that loſs ſupply'd,
In youth my guardian, and in age my guide.
Thy voice had taught to bend my ſtubborn will,
Lur'd me to good, and warn'd my wiſh from ill.

While Virtue, in thy life to fight confest,
 With heav'nly charms had vanquish'd all my breast,
 With borrow'd vigour I had learn'd to tread
 The path she points, by thy example led:
 Now, my guide lost, I trace the arduous way
 With feeble step, and scarce forbear to stray.
 O friend! O brother! — but why thus again
 Will these dear names my tortur'd mem'ry pain?
 Forever gone, thou wilt not leave the skies,
 For friendship's wild complaints, or nature's cries.
 Ah! what avail'd with studious toil t' explore
 What ancient science taught, or modern lore,
 Since not the treasur'd stores of wisdom save
 The laurel'd head from the devouring grave!
 Yet if, blest spirit, minds celestial know
 To joy at honours paid their names below,
 Hear *Philomela's* strains rehearse thy praise,
 While ev'ry muse inspires the moving lays;
 Lays that shall last, while virtue boasts to warm
 The gen'rous breast, or sacred verse can charm:
 And see thy works thro' foreign nations known,
France marks their worth, and makes thy *Lives* her own:
 And conscious of their right to equal fame,
 The rival volume joins with *Plutarch's* name.

THEOPHILUS ROWE.



POEMS

ON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

HORACE, *Book I. Ode xii. imitated.*

1708.



CLIO, heav'n-born muse! what happy
man,

Or godlike hero, shall thy well-tun'd
harp,

Or pipe shrill-sounding celebrate? Or if

A loftier theme delight thee, say what God

Shall *Echo*, pleasing babler, taught by thee,

Sing in the shades of *Helicon*, or *Pind*,

Or *Hæmus*' sacred mount? where *Orpheus*, skill'd

In arts maternal, list'ning rivers stopt

268 POEMS on several occasions.

In their swift courses, lull'd the winds to silence,
And made the stubborn oaks attentive move
To aukward dances their unwieldy limbs.

WHERE better can the pious muse begin,
Than with the universal Father's praise?
Who rules the pow'rs above, and men below,
The earth's wide plains, the sea's unbounded waves,
And laws to all the vast creation gives,
With undisputed sway; himself secure
Of own'd preheminance; nor equal knows,
Nor aught that may deserve a second place.
Yet *Pallas* next our adoration claims;
Immortal maid, in arts and arms supreme:
Bacchus, the soft amuser of our cares,
With *India's* conquest proud: *Diana*, foe
To beasts untam'd: *Apollo*, tuneful God;
Able alike to give the wretched life
By potent herbs, and villains certain death
By never-erring darts, command our lays.

NOR ever shall the grateful muse forget
Alcides, matchless hero; nor the *Twins*,
Whom *Leda* bore to *Jove*; this skill'd to tame
The fiery courser, this in fight untam'd;
Both by the mariners rever'd: for soon
As their auspicious star adorns the skies,
The foaming waters trickle from the rocks,
The winds retire in whispers; blackest clouds,
That erst portended storms, divide, and leave
A pleasing day, and ev'ry threat'ning wave

(So will the Gods! so unresisted fate!)
Sinks to a calm, and sleeps upon the seas.

WHAT next forbids to sing *Britannia's* chiefs,
In war and peace illustrious? *Brutus* first,
Sire of the nation; *Egbert*, pow'rful prince,
Source of a thousand kings; *Normannia's* duke,
An easy, and a rightful conqueror
Of realms his own: Or shall I those record,
Who born beneath a throne, to distant climes
Extended *Britain's* glory, and their own?
Talbot, a name still dreaded by the *Gaul*:
Warwick, sure punisher of perjur'd kings,
Who play'd with crowns, and toss'd the gilded trifles
To whom he pleas'd, despising them, as far
Beneath his own acceptance: *Dev'reux*, long
By great *Eliza* favour'd, lost at last
By wiles of statesmen, and heroic crimes.
Who can enough or *Vere*, or *Cândish* praise?
Or *Drake*, *Iberia's* scourge? him poverty
Paternal, and a youth inur'd to hardships,
Fitted for vast exploits, and taught to gain,
By merit, honours fortune had deny'd.
Thro' ev'ry age the *Russel's* patriot race
Rises in fame. The bright *Nassovian* star
Shines with transcendent splendor, and excels
All lesser lights, as *Phæbe* those of heav'n.

FATHER and guardian of the human race,
Offspring of *Saturn*, who by fate's decree
Dispos'est *Anna's* destiny; preserve
Thy precious charge, extend her glorious sway.

May she acknowledge thee alone superior,
 Nor have on earth an equal: If she drives
 From her realm's limits the invading *Gaul*,
 Or on the hostile land due vengeance takes,
 Haughty in well-got spoils; still under thee
 May she in mildness happy nations rule.
 Do thou *Olympus* with thy chariot shake;
 Then justly on thy foes and ours, incens'd,
 Dart forked lightning, make destruction cease,
 And bless the sinking world with lasting peace.



TIBULLUS, *Book I. Elegy iii.*

WHILE you, *Messala*, with your warlike train,
 In haughty triumph plow the subject main,
 Me my hard fate in realms unknown detains,
 Thro' all my frame a dire distemper reigns,
 And very hardly life itself remains,
 O could my pray'rs obtain a short reprieve!
 Would the grim tyrant a kind respite give!
 I have no mother here to close my eyes,
 And grace with pious tears my obsequies;
 No sister, who in loose, dishevel'd hair,
 And all the pomp of desolate despair,
 Should shed rich spices at my sepulchre:
 Nor *Delia*'s here, whose presence could create
 Health and new life, each raging pain abate,
 And reconcile my soul to all the ills of fate.

She, e'er I went, fought ev'ry pow'r above,
 And ev'ry pow'r seem'd gracious to her love;
 All spoke a safe return, yet still the fear'd,
 And tender anguish in her looks appear'd;
 Tears from her eyes in briny torrents fell,
 And sighs, in rising, choak'd her last farewell.
 I too oft' sought pretexts for my delay;
 Foul birds and baleful omens stop't my way,
 Or stars averse, or *Saturn's* luckless day.
 Oft' I return'd, a longer time to wait,
 Mov'd by ill-boding stumblings at the gate.
 Taught by my harms, let men with caution move,
 Nor tempt the wrath of unconsenting love.
 What is thy *Isis*, *Delia*, now to me?
 Or what the fruit of thy vain piety?
 What have I gain'd from all thy widow'd nights,
 Giv'n all to her, and stoln from our delights?
 Yet, Goddess, save! exert thy healing pow'r,
 And to lost health a sinking wretch restore!
 That *Delia* may before thine altars bow,
 Perform in pious gratitude her vow,
 And oft', with hair unbound, in artful lays,
 Among thy *Pharian* crowd, may chaunt thy praise;
 When I to my poor household Gods return,
 And monthly incense to my *Lares* burn.
 O for that age of innocence again,
 That blest the world in good old *Saturn's* reign!
 E'er the divisions of the earth were known,
 Or men, for foreign lands, despis'd their own.
 While the tall pine yet on the mountain stood,
 The safe, unenvy'd monarch of the wood,

Not yet cut down, and taught on seas to brave
 The rage of ev'ry wind, and ev'ry wave :
 For yet no mariner, for sordid gain,
 Disturb'd the quiet of the watry reign.
 The ox, unyok'd, might thro' the pastures stray ;
 Nor the tough bits taught horses to obey.
 No doors secur'd the houses yet, nor bounds
 To private use confin'd the fruitful grounds.
 Soft honey from the solid oaks distill'd :
 The sheep, that rang'd unguarded o'er the field,
 Unsought, to ev'ry hand their swelling dugs would
 yield.

No thirst of empire, no ambitious rage,
 Nor fell debate, taught mortals to engage,
 Nor broke the calm repose that blest the peaceful age.
 Now, under *Jove*, reign rapine, slaughter, hate,
 And wars, and stormy seas, and thousand forms of fate.
 O spare, great Sire ! I never falsely swore,
 Blasphem'd thy awful name, nor dar'd thy pow'r.
 But if the fatal, destin'd hour is come,
 Be this inscription plac'd upon my tomb :

*While number'd with Messala's martial train,
 The toils of land, and dangers of the main
 Tibullus prov'd ; by early fate oppress'd,
 Beneath this humble tomb his ashes rest.*

But me, love's Queen, her ever-faithful slave,
 Will still protect, and cherish in the grave ;
 She blest me living, and will guard me dead,
 And to th' *Elysian* fields her constant vot'ry lead.
 Bright scene of endless bliss ! where feather'd throngs,
 With slender throats repeat melodious songs.

Th' unlabour'd meads spontaneous *Cassia* bear ;
 And purple roses flourish round the year.
 Join'd with soft nymphs, the shepherds dance and play,
 And sport a glad eternity away.
 Mirth and gay joys reign o'er the blissful space,
 And youth immortal smiles in ev'ry face.
 Unhappy lovers, by stern fortune's hate,
 And the rough hand of unrelenting fate,
 Snatch'd sudden from their joys, are doubly blest,
 With myrtle wreaths distinguish'd from the rest.
 Far from these regions of unmix'd delight,
 Hid in thick shades of everlasting night,
 Are the dire mansions and severe abodes,
 Sacred to vengeance and infernal Gods :
 Round the sad seats sulphureous waters roar,
 Vast *Cerb'rus* barks before the brazen door ;
Tisiphone, with snaky tresses crown'd,
 Lashes the flying criminals around,
 And with the dreadful noise the gloomy caves resound. }
Ixion there, whose insolence durst move
 To impious fires the royal bride of *Jove*,
 Fix'd on his restless wheel, while endless years
 Pursue their course, the whirling vengeance bears.
Tityus extended o'er nine acres lies,
 And daily food to rav'nous birds supplies :
 And *Tantalus*, with seeming plenty curst,
 Sees waters court his lips, yet dies for thirst.
 There justly suffer *Danaus'* cursed race,
 The horror and the hate of all the dismal place ;
 Who braving love, and *Hymen's* sacred rites,
 Could slay their husbands on their nuptial nights.

There may the wretches howl, whoe'er they be,
 Who wish'd ill-fortune to my loves and me;
 That I might from my *Delia* wander far,
 Thro' all the hardships of a tedious war!
 But thou, my love, thy constancy retain,
 And true to me, and thy own vows remain;
 In safe retirement my long absence mourn,
 Nor form a wish for joy, 'till my return.
 Let thy old faithful nurse be ever by,
 The ancient guardian of thy chastity;
 Whose tales may chase the ling'ring shades away,
 And lull thy sorrows 'till the dawning day.
 Sudden I'll come, as to thy wishes giv'n,
 And sent by some strange miracle from heav'n;
 Then thou, my *Delia*, with an hasty pace,
 Run unadorn'd and loose to my embrace.
 When, when, ye pow'rs, will that bright morning rise,
 To paint with livelier red the eastern skies,
 Which ending all my griefs and dire alarms,
 Shall give my *Delia* to my longing arms?
 Propitious Heav'n, all obstacles remove;
 And let me die, at least, with the dear nymph I love!





* *An ODE on VIRTUE.*

I.

CELESTIAL Virtue, offspring of the sky,
For thee alone I touch the trembling string;
Assist thy modest votary,
And take the humble incense that I bring:
Excuse at least the doubtful song,
While mortal lays the lofty subject wrong.

II.

THY charms, bright Virtue, all mankind confess;
And ev'n the monster Vice,
When she th' unpractis'd sinner would entice,
To meet his first attempt she borrows thy address,
Is bashful yet and nice,
A virgin delicacy seems to wear:
For should her own deformity
Without disguise appear,
What doating wretch but would the terror fly?

What

* By a letter of Mrs. Rowe's, which has lately fallen into the hands of the Editor, it occasionally appears, that tho' she took a pleasure in having this ode ascribed to Mr. Rowe, yet it was, in truth, written by herself: But the present edition was too far advanced in the press, to permit this error to be rectified in its due place.

What desp'rate fool, should she unveil her face,
Would tempt perdition, for the curst embrace?

III.

PRECEDING times in great examples shew
What human minds, inspir'd by thee, can do
By gen'rous principles and honour led,
The lovely *Syrian*, in his blooming age,
Refus'd the fond *Egyptian's* bed,
And stedfastly repuls'd her am'rous rage.

IV.

WHEN ancient *Tanis* in her glory stood,
Proud of her palmy groves and sacred flood;
Which gently flowing from its heav'nly source,
Enrich'd her level borders with its course:
Vast pyramids, with elevated heads,
Pointed the plains, and stretch'd their spiral shades
To distant woods, and far-extended meads.
Rich *Thebes*, devoted to the God of day,
Stood, like her own resplendent planet, gay.
The lofty domes with golden lustre shone,
An hundred gates adorn'd the pop'lous town;
The buildings all were rais'd with wond'rous cost,
With silver foliage the high roofs emboss'd;
Well-finish'd sculpture on the walls was shewn;
For art was here in full perfection known,
E'er *Phidias* wrought in *Parian* stone,
Or *Greece* her skilful *Dædalus* could boast.
Th' *Egyptian* court with soft *Affyria* vy'd
In all her luxury and pride:
But *Pharaoh's* age no promis'd heir supply'd;

His beauteous daughter all his hopes betray'd,
To *Isis* she herself had vow'd

A consecrated maid :

The sacred crescent on her breast she wore,

Her robe with golden stars was spangled o'er.

To *Nilus*' banks the pious fair,

Performing holy rites, did now repair ;

When from the shore an infant's feeble cries

Her virgin train surprize :

Among the reeds a lovely boy they found,

His temples with an ambient glory crown'd,

Divine presages sparkled in his face,

Unvulgar beauty, and expressless grace.

The Gods have thus, the joyful princess cry'd,

My father's wishes with an heir supply'd.

Young *Moses*, her adopted son she nam'd ;

But when his years had reach'd their manly prime,

The title he disclaim'd ;

Govern'd by motives more sublime,

While heav'nly Virtue his high thoughts inflam'd.

V.

By heav'nly Virtue led,

Th' *Egyptian* court, and all its pomp he fled ;

And wand'ring far away on *Midian* plains,

An humble life he chose among the swains.

In moving lays he taught the rural throng

Celestial truths ; while list'ning to his strain,

The flying winds their breath retain,

And winding currents slowly glide along.

Of chaos and the world's great birth he sung,

How from the word divine the fair creation sprung.

High

High *Horeb* from his cloudy summit heard
 The tuneful sounds, long e'er the *Thracian* bard,
 On *Hæmus*' banks, in potent numbers strove
 A savage nation wisely to improve.

VI.

WHEN on *Bethoron*'s plains great *Joshua* chas'd
 The *Amorean* kings;
 Lest darkness o'er their flight her veil should cast,
 And from his sword protect them with her wings,
 Forward before his wond'ring troops he sprung,
 Pois'd in his hand a trembling jav'lin hung;
 Mov'd by an instigation all divine,
 Heroic Virtue, the great hint was thine.

When on the sparkling skies

The daring warrior fix'd his eyes,
 Some God the soldiers in his face regard,
 While from his lips these mighty words they heard.
 Thou sun, he boldly cry'd, thou sun, stand still,
 Nor stretch the shades on *Gibeah*'s lofty hill;
 And thou, fair moon, retard thy hasty flight,
 And gild the vales of *Ajalon* at night!
 Astonish'd nature instantly obey'd,
 And in a deep suspense the heav'nly motions stay'd.

VII.

NOR leave the tuneful heroine un-nam'd,
 Ye virgin muses, who her breast inflam'd;
 Virtue no brighter votary can boast,

No brighter names in all her list appear;
 The warrior's crown, and poet's wreath she claim'd,
 She touch'd the lyre, and shook the pointed spear,
 The life and glory of the *Hebrew* host:

Old *Kishon* to her aid his billows brought,
And on her side the marshall'd planets fought.

VIII.

THE *Medes* subdu'd, and *Ecbatana* raz'd;
The haughty *Persian* with fresh laurels grac'd,
To *Jordan's* banks his num'rous forces led.

Wide as the eastern rule is spread,
The distant realms his glad assistants come:
From *Serica*, and *Oxus'* borders some,
From *Indus'* and imperial *Ganges'* shores,
And where *Iaxartes'* rapid current roars,
The hardy race on wild *Hyrkania* bred,

Advanc'd with bold intrepid breasts.
The tall *Armenians* with their waving crests,
And *Parthians* with their backward bows,
A dreadful scene on *Hebron's* plains disclose,
But none in courage or in splendor vy'd
With the gay troops that left the flow'ry fields,
Where royal *Ulai* rolls his crystal tide;
Their helmets gold, and gold their blazing shields,
With dancing plumes and *Tyrian* scarves, from far
They shone the pride and terror of the war:
With airy feet their coursers spurn'd the plains,

In silver trappings deck'd;
With silver curbs and scarlet reins
Their fiery rage their graceful riders check'd
Incamp'd before the sacred hill they lay,
Where *Salem's* lofty tow'rs their strength display.

IX.

WHILE to their great forefather's aid
 With stedfast zeal the sons of *Israel* pray'd;
 The potent pray'r prevails; a *Hebrew* dame
 By Heav'n was destin'd to the great event,
 To fix a scandal on th' *Affyrian* name,
 A lasting scandal, and immortal shame.
 Led by the mighty impulse, *Judith* went
 Undaunted to the *Persian* leader's tent;
 The chief with wonder gazes on the fair,
 Her gesture free, engaging all her air.

A nice reserve and modest pride
 Chasten'd the native softness in her looks descry'd.
 Her features nobly turn'd, her cheeks disclose
 A fresher blush than paints the blooming rose.
 Her eyes were black, and black her shining hair;
 Black as the midnight clouds, which sometimes grace
 With chequer'd shades the moon's resplendent face;
 Part to the sight was in loose curls expos'd,

The rest a spangled caul inclos'd:
 To that a white transparent veil was join'd,
 Which negligently hover'd to the wind.
 With envious art a shade of finest lawn

Was o'er her swelling bosom drawn.
 A sparkling diamond hung at either ear,
 And rubies round her swelling neck appear.
 Her robes were costly filk, and ev'ry fold
 Vary'd with blue and winding streaks of gold.
 She soon protection and redress obtain'd;

While from the *Persian* chief
 Her moving words procur'd belief,
 And easy credit gain'd.

A rich pavilion to his own adjoin'd,
 Was to the fair that night assign'd,
 Assur'd from all a just respect to find.
 The charming *Hebrew* with her maid retir'd,
 And left the gen'ral with her beauty fir'd ;
 But gentle sleep his am'rous cares appeas'd,
 While thro' the camp the midnight riot ceas'd.

Darkness and silence now combine
 To favour *Judith* in her great design.

Undaunted Virtue fill'd her breast,
 Undaunted Virtue her whole soul possess'd ;
 While by a glimm'ring taper led,

She found the sleeping warrior's bed :
 His sword with an audacious air she took,
 And freed her nation at one noble stroke.

X.

By *Grecian* heroes wonders have been done,
 And lasting fame for great achievements won ;
 But all they tell wild fictions prove,
 Of fated armor, and assisting *Jove*.

No partial Goddess to *Achilles* brought
 A spear and sev'n-fold shield by *Vulcan* wrought.
 No *Pallas* to the field *Atrides* led,
 Nor grac'd the chariot with young *Diomed*,
 When from his raging sword the *Trojans* fled ;

But Virtue own'd the *Argive*'s cause,
 Avenging breach of faith and hospitable laws :
 Their best success was owing still to thee,
 Their prosp'rous Genius thou, and aiding Deity.

XI.

AT ancient *Rome* thy name was long ador'd,
For thee they drew, for thee they sheath'd the sword.

Great *Numa* oft' convers'd with thee,
Amidst the gloomy night's solemnity.

While the pale moon with silver beams
Chequer'd the shades, and glimmer'd on the streams,
Egeria or *Urania*, nymphs divine,
He oft' invok'd by some clear fountain's fall :
However nam'd, the lovely form was thine

That answer'd still his call ;
From thee he learn'd by gentle arts t' assuage
The *Sabines* sullen hatred, and the *Roman* rage,

Nor *Faunus* gave (as story tells)
The peaceful prince fantastic spells ;
To charm fierce lions from their prey,
Or swelling torrents in their banks to stay ;
To turn the lightning's fatal force,
Or break the raging thunder's course ;
These great effects, celestial Piety,
These great effects belong alone to thee.

XII.

MANLIUS and great *Camillus* owe to thee
Their fame and glorious immortality.

Horatius fought by thee sustain'd,
When singly he th' unequal war maintain'd ;
In vain to pass the bridge the *Tuscans* strove,
Backward whole squadrons with his spear he drove ;
Fix'd as his country's guardian God,
On *Tyber's* banks the hero stood,
And stain'd the foaming stream with hostile blood.

XIII.

IN vain ill omens would *Flaminius* fright ;
 In vain his courser, with unusual fears,
 Still backward from the fight
 The furious warrior bears ;
 Unmanag'd o'er the wide campaign he flew,
 And from his seat the daring rider threw ;
 The daring rider mounts again,
 And urg'd the battle on the destin'd plain :
 Unterrify'd with *Hannibal's* great name,
 And full of martial flame,
 Still foremost on the glitt'ring spears he prest.
 The *Roman* Genius, for his life distress'd,
 With a prodigious earthquake shook the ground ;

 The violent force
 Pour'd back the rivers to their inmost source,
 Revers'd the floods, and chang'd their native course ;
 Thrice from the skies portentous thunders sound,
 And thrice ill-boding lightnings blaz'd around ;
 Nor earthquakes, lightnings, nor the thund'ring skies,
 A breast with Virtue guarded can surprize :

 Still resolute and bold,
Flaminius on the thickest dangers flies,
 And bravely met the fate the warning Gods foretold.

XIV.

IF ever praise to *Roman* worth was due,
 If ever Virtue could distinction claim,
 Great *Scipio*, thy illustrious name
 Shall stand the foremost in the lists of fame,
 And future times thy triumphs shall renew.

The conduct of *Fabritius*' age,
 And young *Minutius*' martial rage,
 In thee were eminently found :
 With all that men revere, or Heav'n applauds,
 Thy glorious life was crown'd.
Rome's mighty empire seem'd alone on thee
 Dependent for security :
 Without thee, ev'n her boasted Gods
 Had ill defended their own gay abodes.
 Whatever wreaths at *Thebes* or *Troy* were gain'd,
 Whatever fame at *Salamis* obtain'd,
 Or at *Arbella*'s fatal field ;
 Their most illustrious deeds to thine must yield.
 Nor wast thou in thy public life more great,
 Than in thy last retreat
 To the *Linternian* shades, thy humble seat.
 In all things thou wast modest still and brave,
 Neither to Vice, nor Virtue's self a slave ;
 Virtue was choice, delib'rate choice, in thee,
 Not philosophic pride, nor dull necessity.

XV.

BRIGHT Goddess, what resistless charms are thine,
 That men for thee all human things forego,
 And willingly resign
 The dearest ties and softest names below ?
 By what strange arguments dost thou engage
 Unpractis'd youth, and spiritless old age,
 To brave, for thee, the fiercest tyrant's rage ?
 Bright Goddess, thou the cause alone canst tell,
 And all the sacred mystery reveal.

XVI.

'Tis done ! immortal light without controul
 Comes rushing like a mighty torrent on my soul.
 Transporting scenes are open'd to my eyes,
 I see the inmost glories of the skies ;
 I see the bright distinguish'd crown,
 That led the conqu'ring martyrs on ;
 I walk among the mansions of the Gods,
 The soft recesses, and the blest abodes ;
 I trace the happy vales and lightsome plains,
 Where pleasure, peace and love triumphant reigns ;
 Thro' all the region round
 The voice of festival, and nuptial songs
 Perpetually resound.
 Ineffable the rest,
 And by immortal tongues
 Alone to be express'd.

All hail, ye scourges, flames and tort'ring wheels !
 Your force no more the shiv'ring fancy feels,
 Enlighten'd thus, *Romanus* try'd
 The tyrant's utmost cruelty and pride.

Lucius, with these bright prospects fir'd,
 And young *Hormisda*, their tormentors tir'd ;
Rhea and *Dionysia* trampled down
 Opposing hell, and gain'd the martyr's crown.

XVII.

WITH arts more fatal *Decius* strove
Nicetas' fortitude to move.

In a delicious garden's soft retreat
 The youth was gently laid,
 Wrapt in a silken net,
 A flow'ry couch beneath him spread,
 Where fragrant jess'mins lent a grateful shade:
 A dying breeze, a fountain's easy fall,
 Mix'd with melodious birds, for gay delights did call.
 While a young harlot, in the tempting pride
 Of airy life and wanton beauty, try'd
 With guilty blandishment and art,
 Obscene caresses and licentious song,
 To poison with contagious flames his heart,
 To tempt the faint his holy vows to wrong;
 Unconquer'd yet the youthful faint remain'd,
 And all her proffer'd charms and lewd address disdain'd.

XVIII.

EULALIA to the stern tribunal press'd,
 And boldly there the *Christian* faith profess'd:
 The savage judge suspends her doom,
 Touch'd with her dawning charms and early bloom.
 To *Jove's* high shrine they led the tender maid;
 The priest in his fantastic pomp array'd,
 A golden censer brought,
 With consecrated odours fraught,
 Which fiercely from his hand the virgin caught;
 Beneath her feet the smoking gums she trod,
 Derides the bigot, and insults his God:
 Unmov'd the senseless idol stands,
 With useless thunder in his passive hands;

But all their rage his wild adorers show,
 And in their cruelty
 Surpass'd the fiends below.
 Their scourges, pincers, and their racks they try'd;
 By more than human fortitude sustain'd,
 The suff'ring maid her constancy retain'd.
 Be all the pow'rs of death and hell defy'd!
 Your malice can no more, she faintly cry'd,
 And smiling on her curst tormentors, dy'd.

XIX.

NOR Virtue with preceding times is lost,
 Nor *Rome* alone illustrious names can boast:
 The charming Goddess has not left the stage,
 A thousand great examples grace the present age:
 But Virtue ne'er with brighter pomp was seen,
 Nor wore a nobler form than in the *British* * Queen.

XX.

THOU art thy own immense reward,
 Should man no future state regard:
 Were fields of light, and gay ethereal plains,
 The sanguine flights of visionary brains
 The happy mind, possess'd of thee,
 Would find unmingled joy, and true felicity.
 Were there no gloomy shores, no burning lakes,
 No chains of darkness, nor infernal racks;

Were

Were hell a wild, enthusiastic dream,
 A statesman's trick, a poet's lying theme,
 A pious fraud, a black deceit
 Of mercenary priests, the world to cheat;
 Yet still within itself a guilty mind
 The emphasis of ev'ry plague would find.



An EPISTLE to a FRIEND.

Written in the Spring, 1710.

WHILE pious *Anna's* conqu'ring arms
 Fill pow'rful guilt with just alarms,
 Which now shall soon make discord cease,
 And bless the jarring world with peace;
 While faucy priests sedition prate,
 Arraign the Queen, embroil the state,
 And murmur at they know not what;
 Thou, *Daphnis*, by kind fate sent down
 From the wild tumults of the town,
 Dost, in a happy rural seat,
 Taste the pure joys of calm retreat.
 Nature, with blooming honours gay
 And vernal sweets, invites thy stay.
 See the fair morning of the year
 In all its richest pomp appear!
 See the brisk songsters of the air
 To the forsaken woods repair!

Hear

Hear them in artless harmony
 Welcome back the spring and thee!
 Banish'd from the charming plains,
 No more the sluggish season reigns:
 But ah! the sad detested guest
 Still keeps its empire in my breast;
 For in the absence of the fair,
 Doubt, anguish, jealousy, despair,
 Make an eternal winter there.

DAPHNIS, to whom by gentle Heav'n
 The bliss I languish for is giv'n,
 Who all those beauties canst admire,
 That set my longing soul on fire,
 And gaze on those bewitching eyes,
 For whose dear light poor *Strepson* dies,
 And those tender accents hear,
 Which wound the heart, and charm the ear;
 Gaze not on those eyes too long,
 Nor listen to her tempting tongue,
 Least all thy soul their influence prove,
 And friendship yield to mightier love.
 Call all that friendship to thy aid,
 And tell, oh! tell the lovely maid,
 With all thy eloquence and art,
 What racking sorrows rend my heart:
 Tell her, how I waste away
 In never-ceasing moans the day;
 Waste in woes the tedious night,
 Yet curse the dull, ungrateful light,
 That brings not *Delia* to my sight.

Each sun with fainter beams appears,
 Tho' every breast, but mine, it chears;
 And 'till from her my soul receive
 The joys that she alone can give,
 While all things smile around, I grieve.

Tell her—But ah! I ask in vain
 Thy aid to tell my am'rous pain,
 Tho' none with nicer judgment knows,
 To paint distress, and talk of woes.

Can artful tales my griefs express?
 Ev'n moving numbers make them less.

Not all the muses can inspire,
 Not the great God that tunes the lyre,
 With all his force and all his fire;

Not ev'n her own immortal lays,
 Sacred to glory and to praise,
 And of eternity secure,

Can paint the torments I endure.

O could the charming maid but know
 Part of the pains I undergo,

Pains to none but lovers known,
 And guess my sufferings by her own!

Ye verdant plains, ye flow'ry hills,

Ye little, gentle, murm'ring rills,

Ye peaceful shades and silent groves,

Scenes of soft rest and rural loves,

Say, for you best her secrets know,

And oft' have heard her tuneful woe,

Is the bright charmer ever kind?

Is *Strephon* always in her mind?

Does she not teach the rocks my name?

On wounded barks inscribe her flame?

To the attentive bending boughs,
Whisper a thousand am'rous vows?
Chide the dull lagging hours away,
And in soft sighs accuse my stay?
Zephyrs bear the charmer's sighs,
Waft them gently to the skies;
Hear them, ye little Gods of love,
And all ye awful pow'rs above,
In your own registers record
Each am'rous vow, and melting word;
That firm, unshaken they may be,
As the stern laws of destiny,
And the dear passion may remain
Fix'd as your own eternal reign.

DAPHNIS, dearest youth, excuse
The roving transports of the muse;
If, while fantastic joys she feigns,
To ease her real, mighty pains,
Joys too glorious to conceive,
Too vast to hope, or to believe,
Unmindful for a while she be
Of sacred friendship, and of thee.
Friendship's holy link, that binds
In strictest ties the noblest minds,
My grateful soul shall never break;
For thee a thousand vows I make,
And for thy blifs, my constant care,
I tire the gracious Gods with pray'r.

THRO' all thy life may'st thou possess
Uninterrupted happiness;

Serene may every sun arise,
 To light thee to successive joys;
 May ev'ry hour glide smooth away,
 And smiling as a summer's day.
 No anxious thoughts distract thy breast,
 And no unpleasing dreams infest
 Thy downy sleep and filken rest.
 Whene'er thou lov'st, be light thy chain,
 And gentle thy fair tyrant's reign;
 Soft and melting may she be,
 Artless, innocent, and free;
 And in one word to sum the rest,
 That thou mayst be completely blest;
 In mind, in form, in mien, and air,
 As near with *Delia* to compare,
 As Heav'n can make another fair.

YE Pow'rs, (if any Pow'rs there be,
 That mind so mean a wretch as me)
 From your exalted stations hear,
 And listen to my humble pray'r.
 Your choicest gifts on *Anna* shed,
 Deck with fresh laurels *Marlbro's* head;
 Let the vast minds that guide the state,
 Be without crime or envy great:
 In lower spheres my wishes move,
 I ask no other bliss but love.
 Let fullen stars refuse to bless
 My meaner aims at happiness:
 Let envious fortune blast my toil,
 And all things frown, if *Delia* smile.

Tremble mean souls, when lightnings fly,
 And thunders rend the distant sky;
 Secure the rising storm I'll wait,
 And crave the malice of my fate:
 Only let the tender fair
 Ease the sufferings I must bear,
 With gentle pity cure my smart,
 Appease each horror in my heart,
 Indulge my hopes, allow my fires,
 And own the passion she inspires;
 While I eternal vows repeat,
 And die in raptures at her feet.

PARDON, *Daphnis*, still I rove;
 Whatever subject I would prove,
 Still I return to her, and love.
Delia's my everlasting theme,
 My waking thought, my nightly dream:
 For her alone I touch the string,
 For her in artless numbers sing;
 I neither court, nor hope the bays,
 Too blest, if she accept my lays,
 Pity the weak unable muse,
 And what she cannot praise, excuse.
 Thou too, my friend, content receive
 The wretched presents I can give.
 The feeble muse unpractis'd sings
 In humble notes of humble things.
 Perhaps, when the black storms blow o'er,
 When the waves gently kiss the shore,
 And wars and tumults are no more;
 When peace with balmy wings shall smile,
 And brood auspicious on our isle;

My soul with the bright prospect fir'd,
 With nobler warmth shall be inspir'd,
 With new-born strength shall dare to rise,
 And in bold flights attempt the skies,
 Paint all the gay, transporting scene,
 And sing the *Hero*, and the *Queen*:
 Then with just fires, and loftier lays,
 I'll speak my friendship, and thy praise;
 Great as my theme my force shall be,
 And all my numbers worthy thee.



DAVID'S *Lamentation over SAUL and*
 JONATHAN.

OFFSPRING of *Israel*, by peculiar grace
 Distinguish'd from the rest of human race,
 With splendid names and haughty titles proud,
 Fav'rites of Heav'n, the chosen seed of God;
 Too blest while *Saul* your conqu'ring armies led,
 And *Jonathan* commanded at their head;
 With a long train of shining glories crown'd,
 The envy and the dread of all the nations round;
 Now press'd beneath a loss without relief,
 And only great and eminent in grief;
 In all the pomp of moving sorrow come,
 To pay vain honours at your prince's tomb.

Your beauty and your glory lost deplore:

The great are fall'n, the mighty are no more.

Let all mankind the glorious dead bemoan,
 From pole to pole be the wide ruin known.

Ye gentle streams, with your kind waves diffuse
 Throughout the realms you bless, the dismal news,
 And bid th' unbounded waters, as they flow,
 Convey to worlds unknown the mighty woe.
 Winds, that in tempests Heav'n's just wrath declare,
 And you that in soft murmurs fan the air,
 In all your fleeting courses thro' the sky,
 Bear on your wings our loss, and spread it as you fly :
 Only of *Gath* and *Ascalon* beware,
 Nor whisper out the fatal secret there ;
 Leaſt the deteſted race, our ancient hate,
 Hear the ſad ſound, and triumph in our fate.
 Ah ! 'tis in vain, the long untasted joys
 Already fill their minds with glad ſurprize,
 Glow in their cheeks, and ſparkle in their eyes. }
 The vile idolaters the temples crowd,
 With coſtly ſpices ev'ry altar load ;
 And while the ſky's obſcur'd with fragrant ſmoke,
 Their ſenſeleſs fancied deities invoke,
 Their impious madneſs openly proclaim,
 And loud blaſpheme th' *unutterable name*.
 With niceſt art, the unbelieving fair
 Give a new luſtre to each tempting air,
 Point ev'ry dart, and level all their charms,
 To win ſome haughty warrior to their arms,
 O'er ſome great chief an eaſy conqueſt gain,
 And drag the conqu'ror in a willing chain.
 The barb'rous poets tune their loſtieuſt lays,
 To reach in awkward notes the victor's praiſe ;
 In artleſs numbers celebrate the day,
 And boaſt of vict'ry and of *Gilboa*.

296 POEMS on several occasions..

*Gilboa ! curst mount ! thou ever hated ground,
To after-times by our defeat renown'd !
No more on thee let sacred incense rise,
Perfume the neighb'ring plains, and glut the greedy
 skies ;*

*No more on thee let gentle dews descend,
Nor heav'n of fruitful show'rs the succour lend ;
The desert earth nor fruits, nor herbage know,
But all be wild and barren as our woe !
Since upon thee our princes fell, the shield
Vilely abandon'd on thy guilty field !*

Thou saw'st the dreadful ruin we deplore,

On thee the great are fall'n, the mighty are no more.

O Saul ! O Jonathan ! illustrious pair !

How great ! how good ! how excellent you were !

In peace our only pleasure and delight,

Our only safety and defence in fight !

Philistia oft' has felt Saul's mighty hand

Scatt'ring wide desolation o'er the land ;

Nor less the force of Jonathan has mourn'd,

Whose sword ne'er empty to its sheath return'd ;

But deeply stain'd, and glutted well with gore,

The noblest and the best the hated nation bore.

Less swift the eagle bears his prize away,

Less fierce the lion rends the panting prey.

Alike their skill, alike their matchless art,

To twang the far-resounding bow, and dart

The never-erring jav'lin to the heart :

Alike they dar'd, and fought, and overcame,

The same their martial fire and thirst of fame ;

Ah ! that their hapless end should also be the same !

That hapless end we ever must deplore,

The great are fall'n, the mighty are no more.

Ye num'rous fair that *Israel's* court adorn,
 Above the rest, your prince, your monarch mourn;
 For yours he was, stoop'd to your pow'r alone,
 Your pow'r that only could exceed his own.
 How was he pleas'd when he from conquest came,
 Crown'd with fresh laurels and eternal fame,
 A fair, a radiant circle to behold,
 Clad in rich silk, and proud in pompous gold!
 Who stopt the noisy triumph in its way,
 And made the greatest splendor of the day;
 Who in soft numbers, and melodious lays,
 Made heav'n's wide arch resound the conqu'ror's praise;
 And by the charming music of their tongue,
 Added new glories to the deeds they sung;
 Who with kind love could soften all his care,
 And more than recompence the sullen toils of war.
 How have you strove t'avert the fate we mourn!
 Ascending spices on each hill did burn,
 And Heav'n was tir'd with vows for his return.
 In vain, alas! you vow'd, in vain you pray'd,
 In vain your unavailing off'rings paid;
 Heav'n, by our crimes incens'd, refus'd your pray'r,
 And bad the wanton winds disperse it in the air.
 At least, lament the prince you could not save,
 Shed a soft tear in pity on his grave;
 Suspend a while the conquests of your eyes,
 And in true woe and unaffected sighs,
 Pay your last homage at his obsequies:

The vast, the universal loss deplore,

The great are fall'n, the mighty are no more.

But my wild grief no limits e'er shall know,
 Who to the public join a private woe:
 Ne'er 'till my sorrows with my life shall end,
 I'll cease to mourn my brother and my friend.
 O *Jonathan*! like thee none ever knew
 To pay a debt to sacred friendship due:
 'Tis not in words or numbers, to express
 Thy vast, thy unexampled tenderness.
 Not the soft maid, but lately taught to prove
 The wild disorders of unruly love;
 Tho' the fierce passion reigns throughout her frame,
 And all her soul is melting in the flame,
 E'er felt a love like that which thou hast shewn,
 Soft as the tender sex, and manly as thy own.
 Yet thou art fall'n, alas! no more to rise,
 And death's cold sleep fits heavy on thine eyes.
 Howe'er thy name shall live, the world shall know
 What to thy honour'd memory I owe:
 To all the wond'ring people I'll rehearse
 Thy deathless glories, in no vulgar verse.
 Thou in the first and noblest rank shalt stand
 Of constant friends, a rare, but shining band!
 Where'er unhappy virtue meets renown,
 Where'er the name of love or friendship's known,
 Thou shalt be ever sung; taught by my lays,
 Old men shall sigh, and infants lisp thy praise;
And ev'ry age and nation shall deplore
The great men fall'n, the mighty now no more.



TO DAPHNIS. An EPISTLE.

DAPHNIS, among my dearest friends approv'd,
 And more by me than thy own muses lov'd,
 Whose parts mature in nature's early bloom,
 Give certain hopes of miracles to come,
 Of tender eloquence, and gentle lays,
 And females crown'd with everlasting bays:
 To thee I sing, than whom none more can know
 From a soft lyre what heav'nly numbers flow.
 Thou scorn'st with me those brutes, who rudely wise,
 The whole creation's fairest part despise;
 Thou too hast felt their pow'r, and own'd their con-
 qu'ring eyes:
 Thou too, with me, wilt humble altars raise,
 Nor blame my theme, nor envy at my praise.

OF T' have the muses their own sex inspir'd,
 And with a more than mortal ardor fir'd,
 Taught them in wit and numbers to excel,
 Nor yield to man alone the praise of writing well.
Corinna rival'd *Pindar's* noblest lays,
 And gain'd by merit the contested bays.
 Old *Greece* the charming *Sappho* did adore,
 And hardly boasted in her *Homer* more:
 Still with her fires the love-sick virgins burn;
 Her lays they sing, her tender griefs they mourn;
 Still celebrate her love and her despair,
 And curse the villain that betray'd the fair.

300 POEMS on several occasions.

Of all the nymphs the *Roman* empire bore,
 When great *Augustus* held the sov'reign pow'r,
 None could *Sulpitia* equal, she alone
 Of beauty and of wit could claim the throne ;
 With ev'ry grace and ev'ry muse adorn'd,
 A thousand slaves she made, a thousand scorn'd,
 And in wild fires for coy *Cerintus* burn'd :
 He only her soft measures could inspire,
 For him she sung, for him she tun'd her lyre.
 Long since death ended the fair tyrant's reign ;
 Now not the ruins of her charms remain :
 Devouring time has moulder'd all away,
 Nor left one atom of distinguish'd clay :
 Yet still the charmer in her verse shall live,
 And shall to all eternity survive ;
 Still in her lays immortal beauties shine,
 And kindle love and fire in every line.

BRITAIN, next *Greece* and *Italy* renown'd
 For artful songs, a diff'rent fortune found.
 When ancient *Chaucer* in unpolish'd verse
 Did wond'rous tales with wond'rous art rehearse ;
 When *Spenser* in a mystic fairy scene,
 Proclaim'd the glories of the *Virgin Queen* ;
 When the great *Shakespear* charm'd the list'ning stage,
 With *Juliet's* softness, and *Othello's* rage ;
 When surly *Ben* with nicer judgment writ,
 And bore from *Greece* and *Rome* the prize of comic wit,
 No females could aspire to equal praise :
 Then men alone possess'd the envy'd bays,
 With haughty majesty unrival'd shone,
 Nor fear'd a she-pretender to the throne.

At last ('twas long indeed) *Orinda* came,
 To ages yet to come an ever glorious name;
 To virtuous themes her well-tun'd lyre she strung.
 Of virtuous themes in easy numbers sung.
Horace and *Pompey* in her lines appear
 With all the worth that *Rome* did once revere;
 Much to *Corneille* they owe, and much to her:
 Her thoughts, her numbers, and her fire the same,
 She soar'd as high, and equal'd all his fame;
 Tho' *France* adores the bard; nor envies *Greece*
 The costly buskins of her *Sophocles*.
 More we expected, but untimely death
 Soon stopt her rising glories, with her breath.
 In her youth's prime the charming virgin dy'd:
Afræa well *Orinda*'s place supply'd.
Phæbus did ne'er before a breast inspire
 With larger portions of poetic fire:
 On ev'ry subject she her art could prove,
 Well on each subject sung, but best of love;
 At once she sung, and felt the pleasing smart,
 Love in her numbers reign'd, and lorded in her heart.
 With what amazing force the charmer writes
 Of the dear passion, and its fierce delights!
 Less tender fires the *Cyprian* Goddess moves,
 Less soft the am'rous cooings of her doves.
 Warm'd by her moving lays, the cruel fair
 Learn to put on a more relenting air;
 Indulge their lovers hopes, and pity their despair:
 Chill age is fir'd to unaccustom'd heats,
 The curdling blood a vig'rous course repeats,
 And ev'ry pulse with youthful ardor beats.

O! had chaste transports fill'd her virtuous mind,
 And to permitted pleasures most inclin'd,
Sappho had yielded to her nobler fame,
 And only *Philomela* had been a brighter name :
 But while too oft' her guilty fancy roves
 To loose desires, and wild, disorder'd loves ;
 Unheeding minds with lewd ideas warms,
 And gives adultery and incest charms ;
 The good and chaste abhor the vicious lays,
 And hate the beauties they are forc'd to praise.

GODDESS of harmony, thy succour bring,
 While I thy darling, *Philomela*, sing !
 In vain I call, nor hears the muse my pray'r,
 Hurry'd away by winds, and lost in air :
 Nor, did she hear, would aught her aid avail,
 Beneath the mighty theme all numbers fail ;
 All numbers flag beneath her, but her own ;
 She is sufficient to herself alone.
 Heav'ns! how she charms! how graceful is her mien!
 Her countenance, how like her mind, serene!
 Youth's liveliest bloom, a never-fading grace,
 And more than beauty sparkles in her face.
 How soon the willing heart her empire feels !
 Each look, each air, each melting accent kills.
 Yet the bright form creates no loose desires ;
 At once she gives, and purifies our fires,
 And passions chaste as her own soul inspires :
 Her soul, Heav'n's noblest workmanship, design'd
 To bless a ruin'd age, and succour lost mankind,
 To prop abandon'd virtue's sinking cause,
 To snatch from vice its undeserv'd applause,

To lead in piety's forsaken ways,
 By bright example, and celestial lays.
 With what high transport, in those lays we find
 Express'd the image of her godlike mind?
 How smooth her strains! how easy flow her lines!
 Throughout the whole how vast a genius shines!
 Whate'er she writes, in ev'ry part we see
Astræa's fire, *Orinda's* purity;
 And while her greater glories we admire,
 Less pure's *Orinda's* verse, less fierce *Astræa's* fire.
 If she describes the youthful conqu'ror's charms,
 That gave her liberty unknown alarms;
 If of the faithless *Theron* she complains,
 And fir'd with just resentment, breaks her chains;
 Our souls with her begin, and cease to love,
 And ev'ry passion learns from her to move:
 Or if she rather tries the rural-lays,
 And in a country dress immortal charms displays;
 Our souls th' enchanting sounds transported hear,
 Nor *Mantua* now, nor *Sicily* prefer:
 With her we seek the desolate abodes,
 The simple mansions of the rustic Gods;
 We shun the city, and we court the woods.
 If she with *Tasso* sings the *Christian* chief,
 Who, sent by Heav'n to a lost realm's relief,
 While hell and hellish men in vain withstand,
 Freed from base servitude the holy land:
 Or in a softer and more melting strain,
 Repeats thro' ev'ry grove, and ev'ry plain,
 The constant passion of the *Faithful Swain*;
 Unnumber'd beauties in each part we view,
 And graces *Italy* itself ne'er knew:

Other translations we faint copies call,
 But what she writes is all original.
 But when in more exalted lays she brings
 A pious off'ring to the King of kings,
 Not purer sweets *Sabæan* hills supply,
 Or with more grateful odours glad the sky.
 The seraphs hover in the ambient air,
 Nor think a mortal form inhabits there;
 Amaz'd, awhile they leave the starry throne,
 To see on earth so pure devotion shewn,
 And wonder at a strain so very like their own.

DAPHNIS, dear youth, to whom propitious Heav'n:
 A kind retreat from noise and cares has giv'n,
 Near the calm seat, pure stream, and verdant shade,
 Blest by the presence of the matchless maid;
 Content enjoy the blessings of thy fate;
 Pity the wretches who are curst and great.
 Let the proud *Gaul* for boundless sway contend,
 'Till with his life his dire ambition end;
 'Tis more than empire to be *Singer's* friend!
 O would hard fortune, which has fix'd me down
 To the detested hurries of the town,
 Relenting, change my hapless destiny,
 Grant some few lucky hours, and make me blest like
 thee!

I'd to the charming solitude repair,
 There wait a glad attendant on the fair,
 There on her lovely lips with transport dwell,
 And catch each tender accent as it fell;
 'Till new inform'd, and kindling from her eyes,
 Sure ev'n my grov'ling soul, at length, should learn to
 rise.

Then

Then in each grove, near ev'ry purling stream,
 Bright *Philomel* should be my constant theme,
 In numbers like her own the nymph I'd praise,
 And equal the vast subject with my lays.
 The sylvan Gods to hear my notes should throng,
 And silent rivers listen to my song;
 To all the hills, and vales, and groves around
 The babbling echo should repeat the sound,
 And *Amaryllis*' self be less renown'd.



AN EPISTLE to CLIMENE.

*Imitated from the French of Madame DES
 HOULIERES.*

STILL must we mourn your absence? still complain,
 And court you from your sad retreat in vain?
 When teeming earth with fruitful moisture fed,
 Brings forth new flow'rs to deck the paths you tread;
 When each returning morn shines doubly bright,
 And each cool ev'ning brings a charming night,
 The country shades may yield a soft delight:
 But when o'er all the savage winter reigns,
 Makes bare the groves, and desolates the plains;
 When nature's face is chang'd, and ev'ry day
 Snatches some poor, decaying charm away,
 'Tis downright madness, *Climene*, to stay.
 What new unheard-of pleasures can you find?
 What strange delights to entertain your mind?

Or do important reasons force your will,
 And to the gloomy scene confine you still?
 I guess the mighty cause: You fear to prove,
 In this vile town, the dreadful thing call'd love.
 The little tyrant reigns amidst the sport,
 The smiles and pleasures of the town and court:
 Nor only there, him ev'n the wilds obey,
 And country deserts own his awful sway.
 In vain to woods and solitudes we fly,
 In vain the city change for purer sky;
 More dang'rous ev'n than courts, the shades may prove,
 And with more ease admit th' invader love.
 Wild was the place, and savage all around,
 Where fair *Angelica* young *Medor* found;
 Severe the dame, and grave, and sternly coy,
 Am'rous, and soft, and tender was the boy:
 You know the rest.—Then haste from your abodes,
 Leave the weak shelter of the fields and woods:
 O come, and in a thousand breasts inspire
 Successless rage, and unavailing fire!
 Nor dread th' effects of all their treach'rous arts,
 Their boasted stratagems to conquer hearts;
 Unless the fates assist, their moving tale
 Will never o'er your native cold prevail.
 To prove this true, believe the tale I tell,
 Not oracles more sacred truths reveal.

As wand'ring pensive thro' the silent groves,
 I meditate my sorrows and my loves,
Daphnis, the terror of our woods, I view;
 A mightier name love's empire never knew:

None e'er so well a haughty breast could tame,
Or warm to fires unknown the coldest dame.
Prostrate before a heedless fair he lies,
Sheds fruitless tears, and wastes a thousand sighs ;
Then love and sorrow pleading in his look,
Thus to the cruel nymph the charmer spoke.

How long, my fair, will you your fate delay ?
Still will you idly waste the pretious day,
And in indiff'rence loiter life away ?
Hear always with contempt my tender theme,
Despise love's pleasures, and his pow'r blaspheme ?
Ah, no ! the joys my passion courts in vain,
Another shepherd with more ease will gain ;
His happier flame will your fierce pride remove,
Subdue your stubborn heart, and melt it all to love.
All nature owns the God : In barb'rous plains,
Where half the year is night, and cold eternal reigns,
The frozen race is warm'd to soft desires,
And feels in ev'ry vein the genial fires.
However distant, the dread hour must come,
Which all your fading beauties will resume :
Then in a just revenge, th' offended boy
May give his suff'rings, and with-hold his joy ;
Send a fresh warmth, as ev'ry charm decays,
And wild desires, you want the pow'r to raise.
Ah, nymph ! the horror of this fate prevent,
Appease the angry God, and yet in time repent.
Let tasteless age th' ecstatic bliss despise,
Grow coldly grave, and stoically wise ;
Do you, my fair, while blooming youth invites
To warmer sentiments, and gay delights,

Your scorn and dull indiff'rence dispossess,
 Receive the gentle tyrant to your breast;
 Reward a constant flame, and yield to prove
 The mighty transports of a mutual love:
 No other solid blessings mortals know,
 Nor Heav'n can on its fav'rites more bestow,
 To give a taste of its own joys below.

He ceas'd. The neighb'ring echoes caught the sound,
 The little birds sung tender notes around;
 The list'ning waves in gentle murmurs move,
 And ev'ry balmy *Zephyr* whisper'd love:
 Yet her cold heart in silence heard his pain;
 When the heart's silent, all things speak in vain.



The CAPRICE.

From the same.

NEAR a pure stream, beneath a cooling shade,
 Charming retreat! the pensive *Iris* stray'd;
Iris, a name to distant nations known,
 By her fam'd verse's beauties, and her own:
 Heedless she rovd; for, nor the murm'ring sound
 Of the smooth waves, nor flow'rs that deck'd the
 ground,
 Nor the birds tender songs could charm the fair,
 Or ease her gloomy thoughts, and melancholy care.

At last she cries, Fond love, I own no more
 Thy awful tyranny, and boasted pow'r ;
 No more thro' thee tumultuous fears arise,
 Pain my torn breast, and swell my streaming eyes ;
 A native coldness reigns in ev'ry part,
 And all is calm and quiet in my heart :
 But ah ! how poorly I that calmness taste,
 Forc'd to regret ev'n all my suff'rings past !
 Alas ! th' unwary soul but little knows,
 That wishes for the blessings of repose :
 In the sad state of idleness and ease,
 When nothing busies, nothing too can please.
 The treach'rous tyrant, love, less faintly charms,
 Sweet are his ills, and pleasing all his harms :
 The mind each moment to delights improves ;
 For all is pleasure to a heart that loves.
 In what a tedious round of griefs he lives,
 Who, wretched, his own tenderness survives ?
 Can one who ever felt an am'rous pain,
 Unloving life's vexatious load sustain ?
 Lose ev'ry ling'ring hour, and waste away,
 In dull, unactive indolence the day ?
 Ah, no ! return, soft God, resume thy reign,
 Bring all thy fires to kindle mine again — }
 Alas ! thou wilt not come, and all my calls are vain. }
 Cruel ! thou cam'st an uninvited guest,
 And mad'st, unsought, a passage to my breast :
 Now thou canst all my pray'rs and vows despise,
 And scorn to gain a weak, inglorious prize.
 I ask not for the transports those possess
 Whom thou with smiling fates, and mutual loves dost
 blest.

310 POEMS on several occasions.

The barb'rous, charming youth that rul'd my heart,
Has taught me all thy rigour, and thy smart;
Heedless of mine, in other flames he burns,
And hate, or worse indifference, returns.

The joy of being lov'd I ne'er can prove;
I ask no other now, but that of love.

Have not my fears and my alarms been vain?
How am I sure that I have broke my chain?
Don't I, while I desire, already feel the pain?

What shall I do? what method take to find
The true condition of my floating mind?

See, while I speak, the dear ungrateful come!
His presence clears my doubts, and fixes all my doom.

I view the lovely swain; his sight inspires
Soft melting thoughts, and raging fierce desires,
And all my soul conceives the well-known fires.

Welcome, ye boundless griefs, and racking pains!
Welcome, ye ne'er-to-be-forgotten chains!

Amidst confusion, horror, and despair,
Studious I'll feed the dear distracting care,
And thank thee, gracious Love, that well hast heard

my pray'r.

PINDAR.



* PINDAR's Ode to PROSERPINE.

*Translated from the French of Monsieur
de la Motte.*

Inscrib'd to the Rev. Mr. John Ruffel.

I.

BRIDE of the gloomy king, whose awful sway
The dreadful realms of night obey,
By unrelenting fate at last
Upon thine empire I am cast,
The dreary banks of *Styx* I've past:
'Tis time my faithful shade should pay
The tributary verse I owe,
And what above I promis'd, give below.
Goddeſs, liſten to thy praiſe,
Liſten to no vulgar lays,
Fix'd in dumb attention hear
The nobleſt ſounds that ever reach'd thine ear.

Not

* As an incorrect copy of this ode has been printed under the name of another gentleman, who pretends not only to have corrected several errors, but to have really written many lines in it; 'tis absolutely necessary, in justice to Mr. *Rowe*, to assure the public that they are indebted to that editor for no more than two lines, and the alteration of a very few words in this poem; and that (excepting the removal of one or two expletives) it is now published exactly as the author wrote it.

Not the fam'd † *Thracian* bard, who bold by love,
 Could change relentless destiny,
 And ev'n thy soul to tender softness move,
 E'er touch'd the lyre so well, or strain'd a note so high!
 Less than my charming numbers please
 The treach'rous * muses of the seas;
 Tho' with an art unerring, they
 The list'ning mariners betray:
 In vain before their eyes they view,
 Deluded wretches their own death pursue,
 The death they would not wish to shun;
 Charm'd to the soft delicious fate they run,
 And long to be themselves so pleasingly undone.

II.

TYPHOEUS, whose vast bulk and monstrous pride
 Omnipotence itself defy'd,
 By sad experience taught to know
 Th' unbounded force of an almighty foe,
 Under all *Sicily* oppress'd,
 Feels hills, and plains, and realms lie heavy on his breast.
 Oft' struggling yet, he moves the ground;
 Fierce *Ætna* vomits sulph'rous smoke,
 And cities sink beneath the shock,
 And his wide prison trembles all around.

The God of darkness trembled too;
 He fear'd lest op'ning earth admitting light,
 With dazzling terrors and affright,
 Should fill the pale inhabitants of night,
 And his dire secrets show to public view;

† *Orpheus*. * *The Syrens*.

While

While the bright God would with his piercing ray
Invade th' eternal gloom, and scatter boundless day.

III.

WITH careful haste the frightened God
Visits the upper air, and gains
The fertile *Syracusan* plains,
And *Pergus*' banks made blest by thy abode.

There quickly all his anxious fear
A softer passion did remove,
And turn'd his stubborn soul to love:
Illustrious triumph of thine eyes!

In one short moment he draws near,
He sees, he loves, he bears away the prize.

IV.

O DEAR companions of my virgin joys!

O mother dearer than them all!

O all ye kindred Deities!

And thou, great Sire, the ruler of the skies,

Haste to my aid, and save me when I call!

Vain regrets, and fruitless cries!

The earth divides to make the monarch way;

And soon the sad *Tartarean* shore

With wond'ring joy receives the beauteous prey,

Its happy lord from injur'd *Ceres* bore.

V.

HEAV'NS! what wild cares her soul oppress!

What rage her breast inspires!

See! in *Ætnean* furnaces

She lights avenging fires.

Unhappy island ! desolated plain !
 Fruitful and promising in vain !
 Thou saw'st her raging hand
 Burn rising crops, a grateful load,
 Spread wide destruction o'er her fav'rite land,
 And ruin all the blessings it bestow'd,

VI.

COLD, dull reason, hence ! begone !
 A noble madness seize my mind,
 Transports to vulgar breasts unknown ;
 Wild and roving be my fire,
 My numbers loose and unconfin'd,
 As when above I charm'd, and touch'd th' audacious lyre.
 I would not please by artful lays ;
 Let others curious gardens praise,
 Their nice exactness does but tire my sight,
 And less than happy chance delight ;
 I love the forest's waste retreat,
 Where all's irregularly great ;
 Where nature, uncorrected, unsupply'd,
 Profusely lavishes her bounteous pride,
 The foreign aids of servile art disdains,
 And beauteous in her own disorder reigns.

VII.

GODDESS, all thy pow'r must own,
 All must bend before thy throne :
 Pious pray'rs may move the skies,
 And angry *Jove* is pleas'd with sacrifice ;
 But nor pray'rs, nor piety,
 Nor sacrifice preserves from thee,

The sons of art, with fruitless care,
 The tott'ring building may repair :
 Quickly the feeble ruins sink away,
 And moulder into common clay ;
 Themselves too yield at last, and thy stern force obey.
Thetis, who studious her great son to save,
 Doom'd long before to fall at *Troy*,
 Dipt him all o'er in *Styx's* wave,
 Yet left a place for fate, and mourn'd the daring boy.

VIII.

How num'rous are the worlds of dead,
 That o'er thy vast domain are spread !
 New nations every moment land,
 And cover all the spacious strand.
 The stubborn destinies no mercy show ;
 All mankind ('tis fate's decree,
 And fix'd as fate itself can be)
 Must people the dark realms below.
 Grandeur, courage, learning, wit
 To thy resistless laws submit :
 The king and beggar share an equal doom ;
 The mightiest conqu'rors must come,
 To join the crowds they vanquish'd, in the tomb.
 Vainly, tuneful bards, ye strive
 To gain that immortality you give ;
 In vain you seek to shield your destin'd head,
 In vain by meaner worth would save
 Your sinking carcase from the grave ;
 Dare ye to hope for life, when *Pindar's* self is dead ?

IX.

INEXORABLE Queen, thy force proclaim,
 In fullen majesty maintain
 Thy dreaded, universal reign,
 Nor own imperial *Juno's* greater name.
 Only my verse shall with thy pow'r engage,
 Dare all thy might, and brave thy feebl' rage;
 My verse, which spight of fate, and thee,
 Shall please to all eternity.
 Let Gods averse, and hostile pow'rs
 Level with earth *Thebes'* lofty tow'rs;
 Still the more lasting notes I sung,
 My country's ruins shall survive,
 And rev'renc'd even by foes shall live,
 Charm ev'ry ear, and dwell on ev'ry tongue.

X.

BUT hark! what sounds are these I hear?
 What other music wounds my ear?
 Heav'ns! 'tis *Corinna* sings! too well I know
 The rival lyre, and lovely, conqu'ring foe.
 Ah! 'tis too much, insulting maid!
 To hope a second triumph o'er my shade:
 No longer thou in those bright charms canst trust,
 Which forc'd ev'n rev'rend age to be unjust;
 Thy pow'rful eyes no longer plead thy cause,
 Prevent all censure, and secure applause.
 See, while I speak, thy weakness all appear!
 Only the vulgar dead, a nameless throng,
 About thee crowd, and listen to thy song;
 While all th' illustrious shades my numbers hear:

Orpheus,

Orpheus, who first inspir'd the vocal lyre,
Homer, the *Grecian* muse's fire,
 And the gay * *Teian* bard attend my lays;
 And by their silence best proclaim my praise.

XI.

My charming music can assuage
 The triple-headed monster's rage;
 Gentle at my feet he lies,
 No longer threatens with his eyes;
 And all his ears are busy on the notes
 That stop the yellings of his idle throats.
 Here *Sisyphus*, with endless toil oppress'd,
 Leans on th' unmoving stone, and shares a pause of rest.
 Fix'd on my voice, there the dire † *Sisters* lie,
 Their empty vessels stand neglected by.

Ev'n the stern *Minos*, for a while,
 His rugged visage soften'd to a smile,
 Puts off the judge, and yields to give
 The trembling criminals a short reprieve.

The fates, that never pity knew,
 Are soften'd into pity too;
 And negligent to cut the tender thread,
 Rob hell awhile of its appointed dead.
 See! ev'n the *Furies* list'ning stand,
 And on my songs intent,
 Forget the care of punishment;
 And each avenging whip drops gently from their hand.

* *Anacreon*.† The *Belides*.

XII.

THUS, *Ruffel*, in the shades below,
 The godlike *Theban* tun'd his lyre ;
 While the sad ghosts th' enchanting sounds admire,
 And unknown pleasures fill the realms of woe.
 Alas ! in vain I would thy judgment cheat,
 Thou seest thro' all the thin deceit ;
 Thou seest my trifling rage, and counterfeited fire.
 O ! were my soul, like thine, posselt
 Of all the noblest treasures of the *East* ;
 Could there in each well polish'd line
 Appear a genius as refin'd as thine ;
 Were all my verse like thy just language strong,
 And soft as when thy moving tongue
 Charms every passion of th' attentive throng ;
 My daring muse should never fall
 Beneath its vast original ;
 Like the * *Dircean* swan I'd nobly rise,
 Spurn the dull earth, and soar above the skies :
 The diff'rence ev'n by thee should scarce be known,
 And the great bard himself my equal numbers own.

* *Pindar*.





An ODE. To DELIA.

I.

ETERNAL God, whose awful pow'r
 The trembling seraphs own ;
 When prostrate low before thy throne,
 With cover'd faces they adore,
 And sing thro' all the vaults above,
 The wonders of thy grace, and glories of thy love :
 How vast the pleasures ! how intense !
 That from thy throne in living torrents roll ;
 How well they ravish ev'ry sense,
 And fill up all the soul !
 Where happy minds repos'd in thy embrace,
 Unveil'd behold the splendor of thy face,
 And in ineffable delight,
 Feast on thy love, and on thy sight
 Thro' all eternity employ
 Their pow'rs sublime, and equal to their joy.

II.

FAIN would the humble muse aspire,
 And to celestial transports tune her lyre ;
 But ah ! in vain her strength she tries,
 Feeble and faint, she dreads the skies,
 And sinks the more, the more she strives to rise.
 My soul too sinks, as well as she,
 Forgets its own immortal pedigree,

Forgets the skies, its native seat,
 And grov'ling low in dust and clay,
 Heedless of aught divinely great,
 It wastes the precious hours away,
 In joys that fly as swift as they.
 The sinful flesh, a heavy load,
 Drags down the bright, immortal part,
 Weakens its pow'rs, and fixes all the heart
 Far from its heav'n, and from its God :
 Terrestrial objects ev'ry rapture move,
 For them alone it learns to love,
 For them with ease neglects the distant joys above.

III.

DELIA, whom propitious Heav'n
 The softest cure for my worst ills has giv'n ;
 To aid in wand'ring thro' life's tedious road,
 To banish horror and despair,
 Tear from my heart each wildest care,
 And lighten more than half its load ;
 Look down with pity on my state,
 And help, as you compassionate.
 Thou art my only hope below :
 Where'er I stand, where'er I go,
 'Tis all enchanted ground ;
 Temptations ev'ry where abound,
 And snares, and baits, and darkness all around.
 Inticing vice, with fatal charms,
 Tempts me from virtue's noble toils,
 To her destructive arms :
 With what a grace the *Siren* smiles !

How fair her painted face !

Eager I gaze myself away,

Long her bewitching dictates to obey,

And rush to mis'ry in the soft embrace,

Thou art my guide, and if thou lead,

Ev'n yet, perhaps, I virtue's paths may tread,

Trace without fear the bright, but toilsome way ;

If thou neglect thy care, infallibly I stray.

Thus if a poor, benighted traveller

Sees in the gloomy skies one friendly star,

He blesses the auspicious light ;

Then thro' the horrors of the night,

With cautious steps pursues his doubtful way,

And patient waits the slow approach of day.

IV.

How strange, alas, my frailties be !

I find temptations ev'n in thee :

Dissolv'd in blifs, and melting in thy arms,

I lose the relish of celestial charms ;

On thee alone my wand'ring thoughts employ,

And lost in thee, forget superior joy.

O thou whose unresisted sway

My wildest passions still obey !

Use all thy pow'r, each baser thought controul,

Raise just desires, and regulate my soul ;

Instruct my feeble fancy to conceive

Joys above all that earth, or thou canst give.

O couldst thou to my frozen breast inspire

One spark of thy own heav'nly fire ;

That I too might th' immortal transports know,

And more than taste a paradise below !

Scarce the bright cherubs, or the blest above
 A more celestial ardor prove;
 Scarce all their harps, and all their lays,
 Their great Creator better praise,
 Or reach in loftier notes the triumphs of his love.

V.
 WHENE'ER I read the moving lines,
 Where well exprest the lofty subject shines,
 I see the joys I should pursue,
 And all the skies are open'd to my view:
 Hail, happy realms! divine abode!
 Hail, mansions worthy your creator, God!
 And can a mortal then possess
 A place in your bright palaces?
 Who could refuse, such glories to obtain,
 A few short hours of toil or pain?
 The martyrs gain'd you thro' a bloody way,
 Sure I could dare as well as they;
 With vig'rous zeal in virtue's cause engage,
 And stem the torrent of a vitious age.
 Inchanting vice no more my soul shall warm;
 I see the fiend reveal'd in open light,
 Heav'ns! how the hideous form offends my sight!
 Amaz'd I shrink away, and wonder she could charm.
 How soon the noble warmth's decay'd!
 How soon the gen'rous raptures fade!
 I cease to read; and now they are no more,
 And I grow faint and wretched, as before.
 O help me still! let the great theme you've sung
 Still entertain your thoughts, and dwell upon your tongue.

Whene'er I sink, whene'er I fall,
 Attempt the heav'nly strain,
 Again my spirits to just heights recall,
 Touch ev'ry sprightly string, and raise my soul again.

VI.

So may pure joys crown each returning day,
 Soft be thy nights, and ev'ry dream be gay;
 Roll smooth each hour, thy breast no trouble prove,
 But the kind, gentle cares of mutual love!

So long may thy inspiring page,
 And bright example bless the rising age;
 Long in thy charming prison mayst thou stay,
 Late, very late, ascend the well-known way,
 And add new glories to the realms of day!
 At least, Heav'n will not, sure, this pray'r deny;
 Short be my life's uncertain date,
 And earlier long than thine the destin'd hour of fate!

Whene'er it comes, may'st thou be by,
 Support my sinking frame, and teach me how to die;
 Banish desponding nature's gloom,
 Make me to hope a gentle doom,
 And fix me all on joys to come!

With swimming eyes I'll gaze upon thy charms,
 And clasp thee, dying, in my fainting arms;

Then gently leaning on thy breast,
 Sink in soft slumbers to eternal rest;

Without a groan resign my breath,
 Nor shrink at the cold arms of death;
 The ghastly form shall have a pleasing air,
 And all things smile, while Heav'n and thou art there.

VII.

Now of immortal crowns possess,
 Humbly adoring with th' inferior blest,
 I'll leave each mortal care below;
 Only my love for thee shall ne'er a period know.
 Whœver storms are threat'ning, I'll be near,
 Avert the danger, and prevent thy fear;
 Oft' mingle with the bright, descending throngs,
 And learn from thine to raise my songs.
 Then, when thou must at last resign to fate,
 On thy departing soul I'll wait,
 With studious pleasure guide my fair
 Thro' the first paths of blissful air;
 Then, led by thee, pursue a loftier road,
 To upper regions daring soar,
 Vast realms of bliss unknown before,
 Heav'n's inmost palaces explore,
 And bear th' enjoyment of a smiling God.
 New pow'rs, new graces shall adorn my mind,
 Almost like thine exalted and refin'd:
 My flame shall with my strength improve;
 While we a tuneful off'ring bring,
 (For taught by thee, I too shall sing)
 And bless thro' endless years the Fountain of our love.



An ODE on LIBERTY.

I.

BRIGHTEST offspring of the skies,
 Great source, from whence to hapless mortals flow
 Pleasures sincere and noble joys,
 And ev'ry real blessing left below,
 Immortal Liberty! to thee
 The tribute of my voice I bring ;
 Goddess, accept the disproportion'd praise,
 Accept the well-designing lays,
 Mean and humble tho' they be,
 And wrong the mighty theme they sing :
 Others may better plead thy glorious cause,
 By loftier strains secure of just applause ;
 But none could e'er admire thy beauties more,
 Or with a purer zeal at thy blest shrine adore.

II.

OF his own image thee, the noblest part,
 To new-born man th' Almighty gave ;
 Thee deep infix'd within his breast,
 The principle of all that's good and brave.
 And well on earth thy dictates were pursu'd,
 When shining with un sullied grace.
 His work the pleas'd Creator view'd,
 And blest a well deserving race,

Blest the rising golden age ;
 Too soon, alas ! it ceas'd, succceeded impious rage :
 And vile, degenerate men deserv'd to be
 Hated of Heav'n, and ignorant of thee.

III.

To endless ages be the monster curst,
 That banish'd thee from nations first !
 Who for fond notions of unbounded pow'r,
 (Heav'n's right alone) despis'd a lawful sway ;
 Could think it great to ruin and devour,
 And force unwilling wretches to obey.

Nor less reproaches load his head,
 Be he the scorn of all th' illustrious dead !
 Who first could live and be a slave,
 With servile awe could bear unbroke
 On his base neck the galling yoke ;
 Nay more (ye Pow'rs !) could bless the tyrant's reign,
 Submit with pleasure to his fate,
 Praise the dire ills of arbitrary state,
 Thy sacred name blaspheme, and hug the hated chain.

How far unlike those souls, that form'd
 Of purer mold, of more celestial clay,
 By thy great rules had all their bosoms warm'd,
 And made impatient of unequal sway,
 Were born in happy climes above the rest
 Of lost abandon'd men, by thy bright presence blest !
 O Goddess ! could I feel but half the fire
 That caus'd the deathless actions I admire,

Thro' which unmov'd thy vot'ries stood,
 Still true to honour, and to thee,
 Espous'd thy cause, and lavish of their blood,
 Run thro' a thousand certain deaths, to set their country
 free!

IV.

I'd sing their deeds, and sing thy praise,
 In such vast, such lofty lays;
 That not alone the neighb'ring hills around,
 But heav'n's wide arch should echo to the sound:
 Tyrants should hear the moving strain,
 Tyrants in nations yet unknown,
 Should scatter blessings from the throne,
 And try the pleasures of a gentle reign;
 And crowds of senseless slaves again,
 Strange miracle! should turn to men.

V.

ALL other succour I refuse;
 My glorious theme, be thou alone my muse!
 The humblest bard, if thou inspire,
 Shall touch the string, and tune the lyre,
 And kindle to a more than mortal fire;
 With forces not his own shall rise,
 Leave far the airy *Alps* below,
 And mountains rev'rend with eternal snow,
 And soar with daring flight above th' inferior skies.

VI.

UNJUSTLY we *Apollo* praise,
 Author of verse, and God of lays;

Nor

Nor he to *Linus* did his art infuse,
Nor *Orpheus* learn'd it from his parent muse:

Can aught or great or charming be,

That knows another source than thee?

By thee the first of poets taught,

(Whom Heav'n a great deliv'rer gave,

Israel's favorite sons to save)

Sung the stupendous miracles he wrought:

He sung a race by long oppression broke,

And sunk beneath the curst *Egyptian* yoke,

Set free, and led from out the barb'rous land,

By signs surpassing faith, and Heav'n's extended hand.

Yet so deliver'd, that they seem to be

Abandon'd to more certain misery;

They view the raging sea before,

With angry billows lash the shore;

Their foes, more dreadful, urge behind,

And eager on their prey, outstrip the wind.

In vain your chariots and your hosts pursue,

Almighty vengeance flies more swift than you.

The sea retir'd with joyful haste,

While thro' its depths the *Hebrews* past;

Yet with more joy turn'd back its waves,

T' o'erwhelm the tyrant, and his herd of slaves.

VII.

THINE too the numbers, when his awful tongue
Call'd heav'n and earth to listen to his song,

To hear a tale, a sight to view,

Strange beyond thought, beyond example new:

A people proud by Heav'n's protection made,
 Secure amidst surrounding troops of foes,
 Thro' wilds unknown and trackless desarts led,
 To victory, to freedom, and repose:
 To whom the rocks gave water, bread the skies;
 And ev'ry flightest want found sure supplies
 From never-ceasing prodigies;
 Base and ungrateful murmur'd still,
 Scorn'd to be sav'd against their will,
 Mourn'd in warm tears their broken chain,
 And wish'd for nauseous slavery again.
 Well, wretches! you shall quickly prove
 The blessings of the state you love;
 Soon will your crimes the Heav'ns provoke
 To curse you with a foreign yoke.
 Then your repentant grief and ardent pray'r,
 Will reach yon azure vault, and ev'ry God that's there;
 The Pow'rs will lend a pitying ear,
 The Pow'rs, tho' much incens'd, will hear:
 Commission'd heroes shall arise,
 Arm'd with the vengeance of the skies;
 Whose righteous force shall the lost nation save,
 And make fierce tyrants, in their turn, feel all the woes
 they gave.
 Th' event confirm'd his words; of peace possess,
 Weaken'd by luxury and rest,
 By Heav'n abandon'd, by themselves betray'd;
 They fell an helpless prey to all that durst invade;
 Then great deliv'ers to their rescue came;
 A shining list, each glorious name,
 Worthy of Liberty and fame!

VIII.

BEGIN my muse with *Ehud's* praise,
Ehud claims the noblest lays;
 His single and unaided hand
 Freed by one daring stroke the land;
 He (shrink, usurpers, as you hear!)
 Free from danger, as from fear,
 Attack'd a tyrant on his throne,
 And reach'd his life, yet sav'd his own.

IX.

THE laurels gain'd near *Kishon's* stream
 By *Deborah*, be next thy theme.
 To make the *Hebrew* matron justly known,
 Requires such numbers as her own:
 But who, like her, can terribly delight,
 Paint the dire horrors of th' amazing fight,
 All heav'n's artillery display,
 And set the stars embattled in array?

X.

WHAT wonders troops, tho' despicably few,
 Engag'd for freedom, and by heroes led,
 'Gainst mighty crowds of slaves can do,
 Let *Midian's* vanquish'd armies tell,
 Who by the sword of *Gideon* fell,
 Or from his terrors fled.
 Happy the chief in num'rous conquests won!
 Happy in all the softer joys of peace!
 Happy in sev'nty males, a large increase!
 Yet more unhappy in a tyrant son!

The hated product of a lawless flame,
Stain to his blood, and ruin to his name :

For whom all *Israel* curst him more,
Than for his pious care they e'er had blest before.

XI.

ABIMILECH by crimes unknown
Ascended to the guilty throne ;

By crimes unknown he fix'd his pow'r,
Three whole years, a tedious age !

Israel felt the monster's rage.

Heav'n and earth could bear no more :

Prostrate and grov'ling on the ground he lies,
Despair and horror in his dying eyes ;

By a vile woman reach'd, his curst designing brain,
Mix'd with the clotted gore, besmears th' illustrious plain.

Go ! by thy brother's blood begin thy sway,
By envious murders blacken ev'ry day,

All human and all sacred laws defy,
And wake the sleeping justice of the sky ;

Then, full of honour, to the shades descend,
And to the envying ghosts relate thy glorious end !

Thus, thus, ye Pow'rs, conclude all impious state ;
May none that match his crimes e'er share a nobler fate !

XII.

SING *Jephtha* next, my muse ; if verse can crown
Deserving heroes with renown,

The brave, th' unhappy shall be sung,
Fix ev'ry list'ning ear, and dwell on ev'ry tongue.

The chief, with *Ammon*'s sons in fight engag'd,
When with uncertain force the battle rag'd,

Thus

Thus suppliant vow'd: If by my hand,
 Peace and safety glad the land;
 To you, ye sov'reign Pow'rs, that bless
 My righteous arms with wish'd success,
 Whatever first meets my return,
 Upon your altars slain shall burn.
 Heav'n heard; and conquest hov'ring in the sky,
 Flew to the juster side, the servile squadrons fly.
 His only hope, a nymph divinely fair,
 Ran with swift joy to meet her doom;
 To bid the gen'ral welcome home
 From the rough toils of war.
 Heav'ns! what a sight! can words, can lays express
 Th' unbounded woes, th' extent of wretchedness?
 Griev'd, yet resolv'd, he view'd the charming maid,
 And his dire vows with strict obedience paid.
 See to the shrine the lovely victim bound!
 A thousand lost adoring youths around
 Shrink at the stroke, and faint beneath the wound:
 The father dropt a tender tear;
 But soon reflecting on what Heav'n had done,
 And freedom settled by the conquest won,
 He check'd his rash complaint, nor judg'd the price too
 dear.

XIII.

WHATE'ER in fables daring Greece
 Boasts of her *Theseus*, and her *Hercules*;
 In *Samson* Israel view'd, and blest
 The gift of Heav'n employ'd to give them rest.
 Witness his strength, ye thousands slain
 By him, unarm'd, on *Lehi's* plain!

Witness

Witness, ye massy gates, he tore,
 And on his shoulders a light burthen bore!
 O! had he still been true to freedom's cause,

And never felt a meaner care,
 Unrivall'd then had been his just applause,
 Nor *Israel's* annals known a name so fair:

But he to lustful fires a prey,
 In a deceitful harlot's arms,
 Heedless of virtue's deathless charms,
 Idly consum'd the precious day.
 Justly he lost the strength th' immortals gave
 Not for such use, justly was made a slave:

With freedom too depriv'd of sight,
 Wasted in servile works, the constant jest
 Of barb'rous foes, and sport of ev'ry feast;
 Doom'd by his woes to heighten their delight.
 His suff'rings move the skies; his force returns,
 And all the hero with new vigor burns.

'Twas a great festival, and crowds resort;
 Collected nobles fill the spacious court;
 The *Hebrew* captive's call'd, to finish all the sport.
 He comes, the crowd the roofs with clamours rend;

He grasps the solid pillars in his hand,
 Beneath the grasp the solid pillars bend,
 Down sinks the pond'rous pile, and crushes half the land.

The conqu'ror fell amidst the slain,
 And, dying, sav'd a wretched race in vain;
 Unus'd and undeserving to be free,
 They soon abandon'd dear-bought Liberty,
 Chose the vain splendor of a lawless throne,
 And fix'd their children's ruin, and their own.

XIV.

GREECE with hospitable care
 Receiv'd and blest the flying Fair ;
 But Athens most ador'd her charms,
 Athens renown'd in arts and arms.
 Nor less the Goddess lov'd the grateful place ;
 There most she chose to fix her seat,
 There studious form'd a godlike race,
 And minds divinely great.
 Yet there a * tyrant rose, with treach'rous arts
 Well fitted to seduce the people's hearts ;
 With soothing charms to force their sense away,
 And make their liberties an easy prey :
 Gentle his rule, but heroes justly free
 Know no gentle tyranny.
 Twice banish'd, he as oft' return'd,
 And free-born souls the gilded bondage mourn'd.
 In peace he dy'd : Unequal to the weight,
 His sons in sullen rigor rule the state :
 Not long ; for soon a chosen band,
 With well-concerted plots conspire
 To send the tyrants to their fire,
 And ease the groaning land.
 Leana, eminent above the rest,
 Deck'd in superior glories stand confest.
 To the great theme, ye muses, tune your lays,
 Nor blush to sing the glorious harlot's praise :
 Known be her praise, but in oblivion lie
 All her former infamy !

What

What tho' her fatal beauties could intice
 From virtue's manly joys to the soft bane of vice ;
 Lull heedless youth in wanton ease,
 And make the gay perdition please !
 Posterity shall think her crimes undone,
 And nothing real, but the fame she won.
Aristogiton lov'd the dame ;
Aristogiton, most renown'd of those
 That vow'd destruction on their country's foes,
 He lov'd, yet not abandon'd to his flame,
 Lov'd *Athens* more: Oft' in her arms
 He sigh'd for freedom's nobler charms ;
 Oft' mighty vengeance would his thoughts employ,
 Disturb his looser hours, and interrupt the joy.
 The fair herself at last was warm'd,
 And with new fire her hero arm'd,
 Blest his design, and taught him, in her turn,
 To court brave death, and shameful life to scorn.

XV.

* ONE tyrant falls ; stern *Hippias* still survives,
 And for his brother's seeks his murd'ers lives :
 Some prove his rage, but more escape, by fate
 Reserv'd the future patriots of their state.

Leæna, urg'd in vain, suppress
 Th' important secret in her breast ;
 Her tender limbs now curst tormentors tear,
 And waste their barb'rous arts upon the fair ;
 In ev'ry nerve convulsive horrors reign,
 And struggling nature sinks beneath the pain :

Thrice

Thrice on her lips the half-form'd accents hang,
As oft' th' undaunted heroine stopt her tongue:

But when she found her courage fail,
And all the softer sex prevail;
Begone, she cry'd, false, treach'rous part,
Unworthy of my greater heart!
She spoke, and tore the traitor from his place,
And spit it in the trembling tyrant's face.

XVI.

TAUGHT by the great example, *Athens* rose:
Far from the happy land the tyrant flies,
And *Persia's* realm a safe asylum chose:
There the proud monarch, with a tender care,
Receives his fellow-ravisher;
Grants him of slaves immense supplies,
To Liberty a glorious sacrifice;
That great *Miltiades* might be divine,
And *Marathon* in deathless honours shine.

XVII.

BUT *Xerxes'* arms for vengeance, to his cause
Millions of slaves, a world in fetters draws:
Swell'd into madness, as the tyrant view'd
The vast, unnumber'd multitude;
Sure ruin his presumptuous thoughts decree
To *Greece*, and ev'ry land that dar'd be free:
Nor vain his pride, were it to numbers giv'n
To change the firm resolves of Heav'n.
The groaning earth th' unwieldy burthen feels,
Exhausted rivers scarce supply their meals,
Europe from *Asia* to divide, in vain
Rolls its fierce waves the eastern main;

The monarch speaks, and swift at his command,
 The lab'ring squadrons join the land.
 With lashes and with chains he aw'd
 The courage of the watry God;
 The curling billows foam no more,
 And tam'd to dull submission kiss the shore:
 All nature shrinking from his rage,
 Scarce dar'd in Freedom's cause engage;
 Suspended ev'n the Goddess seem'd to stand,
 Doubted of fate's decree, and trembled for the land.

XVIII.

THREE hundred *Spartans* (Heav'n requir'd no more,
 To shake th' intolerable pow'r)
 Thy freights, *Thermopylae*, secure; and there
 Sustain the wildest fury of the foe;
 Yet think it cowardice no more to dare,
 They seek the combat, and prevent the blow.
 Thus issue from the *Lybian* wood
 Fierce lions press'd by want of food;
 O'er weak inclosures force their way,
 Fill all the spacious folds with blood,
 And make the trembling fugitives their prey:
 Nor more the bleating troop th' invaders fears,
 Than *Persia's* host their conquerors.
 The monarch sculks behind his farthest bands,
 Destin'd to perish by less noble hands.
 His coward vassals threaten from afar,
 And distant dart a missive war;
 The chiefs urge on the rage, they wound,
 And deal inevitable death around;

Then with their glorious toil oppress,
And tir'd with conqu'ring, sunk to rest.

XIX.

PLEAS'D, in th' *Elysian* shades they hear
The honours by their country won,
The num'rous glories of a war
Ended by wonders, as begun.
Descending heroes, proud in conquest, tell
What numbers at *Platæa* fell;
At *Mycale*, what heaps of slain,
And *Salamis*, discolour'd all the main.
The cursed instruments of public woe
Crowd all the wide infernal plains;
There justly sentenc'd, undergo
Infinite tortures, and eternal chains.
But the dire * monster, whose unbounded rage
A gen'ral ruin only could assuage,
Fills all the grisly ruler's mind,
And ev'ry thought employ'd, to find
Some equal punishment, some full reward,
For all he acted, and for all he dar'd.
All hell is busy to prepare his doom,
Stern justice waits impatient 'till he come;
For him Omnipotence exhausts its store
Of vengeance yet unprov'd, and plagues unfelt before;
For him with double rage the fiery torrents roar.
The gloomy shade descends; a wretched slave,
Mean as himself, and in this only brave,
Sent him, unpity'd, to a fordid grave.

XX.

THE deathless trophy of the *Perfic* wars
 Intestine broils (a dreadful scene !) succeed,
 Inglorious triumphs, and dishonest scars ;
 While *Grecia's* bravest sons conspire to make their pa-
 rent bleed.

Had but their matchless virtue been employ'd
 In the soft arts of gentle peace,
 Or fav'd the free, and slaves alone destroy'd ;
Ulysses' fame should yield to *Pericles*,
 And the great * youth whom *Socrates* inspir'd,
 Beyond the || son of *Thetis* be admir'd.
 In how bright lustre had the † *Theban* shone,
 Had only barb'rous hosts his valour known !
 Nor *Sparta* can of her *Lysander* boast,
 Since all the hero in the tyrant's lost.

Forbear, illustrious souls, forbear
 To tempt the angry skies ;
 The Pow'rs so much incens'd, prepare
 Your madness to chastise :
 An unknown, despicable hand
 Shall join you in one common woe ;
 At *Cheronæa* strike a fatal blow,
 And drive th' unwilling Goddess from the land.

XXI.

To *Rome* the Charmer wing'd her flight,
Rome, her darling and delight ;

Q²

There

* *Alcibiades*.|| *Achilles*.† *Epaminondas*.

There *Brutus* fix'd the heav'nly Fair's abode,
Brutus, illustrious Demigod!
 Fain would the muse his glorious acts pursue,
 And bring the wonders of his life to view,
 Shining and great in ev'ry part;
 Ev'n then, when he beheld his *Rome* oppress'd,
 Hid the wild tumults of his throbbing heart,
 And in tame folly well the slave confest.
 The Sov'reign thus whom heav'n and earth adore,
 With well-dissembled patience bears
 Some vile insulter of his pow'r,
 Deaf to his wrongs, and to the injur'd's pray'rs;
 'Till by repeated crimes the wretch secure,
 Blasphemes the easy God that can so long endure;
 Then pointed lightnings pierce the skies,
 And with amazing force the tardy vengeance flies.

XXII.

Ev'n now, methinks, I see the hero stand,
 Grasping *Lucretia's* dagger in his hand;
 He summons to his aid deliv'ring *Jove*,
 And all the tyrant-hating hosts above;
 Then from below the matron calls, to view
 The great revenge to her wrong'd honour due.
 Th' astonish'd crowd believe the chief inspir'd,
 And, in a moment, to like raptures fir'd,
 Feel a lost vigor to their breasts restor'd,
 Shake off their fetters, and abjure their lord:
 The bleeding dame almost remain'd unmourn'd,
 While peace, and liberty, and blooming joys return'd.

XXIII.

Too mighty were those joys, too vast,
 Unmix'd with lesser sorrows long to last;
 A few rash youths, a thoughtless band,
 Attempt the exil'd monarch to restore,
 To fix on former props the shaken pow'r,
 And load with heavier chains the rescu'd land.
 What various horrors, Consul, rack'd thy mind,
 Thy sons the first in the black list to find!
 Not long the father with the patriot strove,
 Soon prevail'd his country's love:
 The awful judge to the tribunal comes,
 And to the axe his guilty offspring dooms;
 And views, unmov'd, in each expiring son
Rome's fears destroy'd, and his own hopes undone.

The anguish of his soul and woe,
 He well avenges on th' invading foe:
 Then dies; but struck for freedom as he fell,
 And sent a rising * tyrant down to hell.
 Hail, great deliv'rer of a race oppress'd!

Hail, name to future ages blest!
 Thee shall pure matrons sing, soft virgins thee,
 Avenger sure of injur'd chastity!
 Tyrants unborn shall tremble at thy name,
 And heroes yet to come be kindled by thy flame..

XXIV.

BUT what avail the wonders done,
 Tyrants expell'd, and conquests won?

Within

Within *Rome's* bowels a domestic foe
 Erects a fortress to enslave the land;
 Its lofty heights the town command,
 And threaten ruin all below.
 In words like these the frightened crowd
 Utter their complaints aloud.
 Rash complaints! ill-grounded fears!
 The great *Valerius*, see, appears!
 Submissive, see! he bows around,
 And bends his humble *Fasces* to the ground.
 To you, he cries, from whom all sway descends,
Romans, to you your subject Consul bends:
 Justly you shrink at arbitrary state,
 But hard to judge your magistrate!
 If e'er a pow'r above your laws I fought,
 Or e'er your freedom injur'd but in thought;
 Turn, turn on this devoted head
 The dreadful axes that you gave;
 Or speedier lightning flash me dead,
 And op'ning earth become my grave!
 Soon shall this house be raz'd; and sunk to dust,
 Clear my suspected faith, and prove your fears unjust.
 Already levell'd as he spoke,
 The building sinks amain;
 Down the wide hill the ruins smoke,
 And fill th' extended plain.
 Sublime in impious state, *Versalia*, rise,
 Fit for the wrath and justice of the skies;
 This house destroy'd eternal praise shall claim,
 When with thy pile is lost the hated * founder's name.

XXV.

NOT Gods by all the spacious earth ador'd,
 With half such joy a thousand kings behold,
 Each of unnumber'd slaves the lord,
 Decking their shrines with tributary gold;
 As fill'd the Goddess, when she saw
 Rome's glorious offspring own her law.
 Whom shall I first rehearse? the deathless throng
 Confounds the muse, and tires the lab'ring song.
 Who can enough the *Gracchi* praise,
 Or stern *Torquatus* to due honours raise?
 What colours paint *Servilius*, as he stood
 Warm with great rage, and more than half a God,
 His arm fresh reeking with a * tyrant's blood?
 Who, thro' a train of heroes, trace
 Th' unfading glories of the *Fabian* race?
 In equal numbers, who extol
Camillus, terror of the impious *Gaul*;
 And *Manlius* thund'ring from the *Capitol*?

XXVI.

BLEST *Italy*! where ev'ry plain and stream
 Immortal actions crown;
 The free-born muses grateful theme,
 And sacred to renown.
Horatius here, alone, an army stood,
 Guardian of *Rome* amidst surrounding foes:
 Sav'd *Tyber*, bear his praises on thy flood,
 And bid old ocean spread them as he flows!

There

344 POEMS on several occasions.

There *Cossus* from a scepter'd tyrant tore
His life, and all the gorgeous arms he wore ;
The spoils adorn *Feretrian Jove's* abode,
A present worthy of the thund'ring God !
Marcellus here first taught despairing *Rome*,
That *Hannibal* could be o'ercome.

XXVII.

WHEN *Curius* and *Fabritius* I behold,
August in willing poverty, despise
Barbaric gems, and heaps of proffer'd gold,
And a mean freedom, constant, prize ;
My breast a gen'rous emulation fires,
And all my soul to deathless fame aspires.
All hail ! ye venerable seats,
Of godlike minds the blest retreats,
Low cottages, obscure abodes,
That bred a race of Demi-gods :
Where you, great shades, where *Scaurus* liv'd, and
* thou,
Twice Dictator from the plough.
Ye Pow'rs, how very poor to these,
Appear the loftiest palaces !
I scorn the little, despicable things,
And pity the vain pride of all their builder-kings ;

(Left unfinished.)

* *L. Q. Cincinnatus.*

F I N I S.



THE
HISTORY of JOSEPH:
A
* P O E M.

B O O K I.

An Invocation of the Divine Spirit. A Description of the Temple of Moloch, in the Valley of Hinnon, where a Congress of infernal Powers are met to contrive some Method to extirpate the Hebrew Race.



Celestial Muse, that on the blissful plain
Art oft invok'd, to guide th' immortal
strain;
Inspir'd by thee, the first-born sons of
light

Hail'd the creation in a tuneful flight;

V O L. II.

a

Pleas'd

* This Poem may be had alone, in a larger Print with a curious Frontispiece, to complete the Octavo Edition of Mrs. Rowe's Works: Printed for B. Dod in Ave-Mary-Lane.

Pleas'd with thy voice, the spheres began their round,
 The morning stars danc'd to the charming sound : And
 Yet thou hast often left the crystal tow'rs,
 To visit mortals in their humble bow'rs.

Favour'd by thee the courtly swain of old,
 Beneath mount *Horeb* sacred wonders told,
 Of boundless chaos, and primæval night,
 The springs of motion and the seeds of light,
 The sun stood still, to hear his radiant birth,
 With the formation of the balanc'd earth.
 The moon on high check'd her nocturnal car,
 And list'ning staid, with ev'ry ling'ring star.
 The hills around, and lofty *Sinab* heard
 By whose command their tow'ring heads were rear'd.
 The flow'rs their gay original attend ;
 Their tufted crowns the groves, adoring, bend.
 The fountains rose, the streams their course withheld,
 To hear the ocean's wond'rous source reveal'd.
 The birds sit silent on the branches near,
 The flocks and herds their verdant food forbear.
 The swains forgot their labour while he sung,
 How, from the dust, their great forefather sprung :
 A vital call awoke him from the ground,
 The moving clay obey'd th' almighty sound.
 Thus sung in lofty strains the noble bard ;
 The heav'ns and earth their own formation heard.

But thou, propitious Muse, a gentler fire
 Didst breathe, and tune to softer notes the lyre,
 When royal *Lebanon* heard the am'rous king
 The beauties of his lov'd *Egyptian* sing :

The sacred lays a mystick sense unfold,
And things divine in human types were told.
Disdain not, gentle pow'r, my song to grace,
While I the paths of heav'nly justice trace;
And twine a blooming garland for the youth,
Renown'd for honour, and unblemish'd truth.

Let others tell of ancient conquests won,
And mighty deeds by favour'd heroes done;
(Hercules enslav'd to pride, and wild desires)
A virgin Muse, a virgin theme requires;
Where vice and wanton beauty quit the field,
And guilty loves to steadfast virtue yield.

Jacob, with heav'n's peculiar favour blest,
Leaving the fertile regions of the *East*,
(Where *Haran*, then a noble city, stood,
Between fair *Tigris*, and *Euphrates* flood)
From *Laban* fled, and by divine command
Pursued his journey to his native land.
Loaded with wealth, his num'rous camels bore
His wives, his children, and his household store:
Of purchas'd slaves he led an endless train,
His flocks and herds engross'd the wide champain.

The shepherd's art was all his fathers knew,
His sons the same industrious life pursue.
The God his pious ancestors ador'd,
Th' almighty God, at *Bethel*, he implor'd:
An altar there, with grateful vows he rear'd,
Where twice the radiant vision had appear'd;
The pow'rs of hell the dreadful omen fear'd:

Each demon trembles in his hollow shrine,
The raving priests amazing Things divine.

In *Hinnon's* vale a fane to *Moloch* stood,
Around it rose a consecrated wood ;
Whose mingled shades excluded noon-day light,
And made below uninterrupted night.
Pale tapers hung around in equal rows,
The mansion of the sullen king disclose ;
Seven brazen gates its horrid entrance guard ;
Within the cries of infant ghosts were heard ;
On seven high altars rise polluted fires,
While human victims feed the ruddy spires.
The place, *Gebenna* call'd, resembled well
The native gloom and dismal vaults of hell.
'Twas night, and goblins in the darkness danc'd,
The priests in frantick visions lay entranc'd ;
While here conven'd the *Pagan* terrors sat,
In solemn council, and mature debate,
T'avert the storm impending o'er their state.
Th'apostate princes with resentment fir'd,
Anxious, and bent on black designs, conspir'd
To find out schemes successful to efface
Great *Heber's* name, and crush the sacred race ;
From whence they knew, the long predicted king,
Th'infernal empire's destin'd foe should spring ;
Who conquer o'er their vanquish'd force should
tread,
And all their captive chiefs in triumph lead.
Th'affair their deepest policy commands,
And brought them hither, from remotest lands ;

From *Ur*, *Armenia*, and *Iberia's* shores,
From *Nile*, and *Ophir* rich with golden ores,
And where the *Adrian* wave, and where th' *Atlantick*
roars.

Nesroth appears, his amber chariot drawn
With snowy steeds; him at the rising dawn
The *Syrian* worships from his airy hills,
Whose vales with wealth the fam'd *Araxis* fills.
Belus forakes his high frequented domes,
And o'er the famous plains of *Shinab* comes:
Plegor descends his mount; to him were paid,
With impious rites, libations for the dead.
Imperious Rimmon came, whose mansion stood
On the fair banks of *Pharphar's* lucid flood.
Ofris left his *Nile*, and thund'ring *Baal*
The rock, whence *Armon's* plenteous waters fall.
Mithra, whom all the *East* adores, was there;
And like his own resplendent planet fair,
With yellow tresses, and enchanting eyes
Dissembling beauty, would the fiend disguise.
Nor sail'd a deity of female name,
Astarte, with her silver crescent came:
Melita left her *Babylonian* bow'rs;
Where wanton damsels, crown'd with blushing flow'rs,
In all the summer's various lustre gay,
Detested *Orgies* to the goddess pay.

These various pow'rs, their various schemes propose,
But none th'assembly pleas'd, 'till *Mithra* rose;
(Of an alluring mien above the rest)
Who thus th'apostate potentates address'd.

Mankind by willing steps to ruin move,
 Their own wild passions their destruction prove,
 But the most fatal is forbidden love.

Old *Jacob* boasts a daughter young and fair,
 Fond *Leah*'s glory and peculiar care :
 Her eyes inflame the gazing *Pagans* hearts,
 Young *Shechem* has already felt their darts ;
 Who lately saw her with her virgin train,
 Near *Shalem*, wand'ring o'er the dewy plain.
 I'll fill his youthful breast with mad desire,
 By fraud, or force, his wishes to acquire.
 'The coming day he does a feast prepare,
 By me instructed how to hide the snare :
 Fair *Dinah* is his sister's promis'd guest,
 Impatient love will soon complete the rest.
 The damsel's wrongs her brothers will inflame,
 To right, with hostile arms, the *Hebrew*'s shame ;
 By which provok'd, the *Canaanites* shall join
 With us t'abolish this detested line.

Revenge and bloody faction are my care,
Moloch replies, thine be the soft affair ;
 Without Instructions thou canst act thy part,
 Well-practis'd in the nice alluring art ;
Euphrates' banks, and *Senac*'s conscious shades,
 Attest thy freedom with th' *Affyrian* maids :
 Thy voice, applauded in the heav'nly groves,
 Was there devoted to terrestrial loves :
 Thy sacred lyre to human subjects strung,
 No more with tiresome *Hallelujahs* rung ;
 This grac'd thy hand, a quiver hung behind,
 Nor fail'd thy sparkling eyes to charm the beauteous
 kind.

The bold example of thy loose amours, ydankind
 Prevail'd on numbers of the heav'nly powers; two
 Who vainly had the first probation stood,
 Proof to ambition, obstinately good.
 Long after I, with my associates, fell;
 Thy friends enlarg'd the monarchy of hell;
 On softer motives you abhorr'd the skies,
 Allur'd by womens captivating eyes:
 The sons of God thus with the race of man
 Were mingled; hence the giant stock began.
 Our plot requires us now, and if it fail,
 I'll, in my turn, the hated tribe assail;
 Domestick faction may at last prevail.
Joseph, his doting father's life and joy,
 By well-concerted means we must destroy;
 This youth, above the rest, excites my fear,
 Divine presages in his face appear;
Officious Gabriel's care to him confin'd,
 Foretels a man for mighty things design'd:
 His brethren, act'd by my pow'rful fire,
 Against his envy'd life shall all conspire.
Joseph remov'd, old *Jacob's* greatest prop,
 The race shall mourn, in him, their blasted hope.
 Here *Moloch* ceas'd; th'infernal spirits rose,
 Crowning the double plot with vast applause.





B O O K II.

Jacob's Daughter dishonour'd by Shechem, Prince of
the Hivites. Her Brothers revenge the Injury. The
Patriarch relates to his Sons Abraham's Conquest over
the King of Elam and his Royal Confederates. He
rescues Lot. Melchisedech meets and blesses Abraham.
The intended Sacrifice of Isaac.

Young *Shechem* all the night impatient lay,
And fought with eager eyes the breaking day;
With ardent longings waits the promis'd hour,
And fancies all his wishes in his pow'r:
Aner, his friend, improves the fatal fire,
And sooths, with flatt'ring scenes, his wild desire.

Sidonia, guiltless of her brother's snares,
To grace her lovely *Hebrew* guest prepares;
Who with her young companions now appears,
Too innocent for nice reserves, or fears.
Her artless looks, nor tim'rous, nor assur'd,
With easy charms the *Jebusites* allur'd:
A rosy tincture paints her guiltless face:
Her eyes, peculiar to her beauteous race,
Sparkle with life, and dart immortal grace.
Rich orient bracelets, round her snowy arms,
And faultless neck, improve her native charms.
The *Hivite* princess entertains the maid,
To *Hamor's* palace fatally betray'd;

Where,

Where, at the pomp of one surprising feast,
She meets the luxury of all the East.
Her thoughts the proud magnificence admire,
The people's customs, and their strange attire;
'Till modest rules, and the declining day,
With *Leah's* charge forbid her longer stay;
But ah! too late, she finds herself betray'd
To *Shechem's* pow'r, a lost defenceless maid;
A captive in his treach'rous courts retain'd,
By fraud seduc'd, and brutal force constrain'd,
Her name dishonour'd, and her nation stain'd.

In vain with tender sighs he strives to move
The injur'd fair to voluntary love;
The strictest rules of chastity she knew,
With all that to her great descent was due;
But what with gentle arts he fails to gain,
His wild desires by violence obtain.

The hateful tidings reach'd her father's ears,
And almost sunk his venerable years:
Her brothers rage, and for revenge combine;
But guard with secret guile their black design.

The town in feasts consum'd the second day,
And plung'd at night in fearless riot lay.
The restless shepherds ere the ling'ring dawn,
Each held his sword, for horrid action drawn;
Surpris'd the city like a rising flood,
Rag'd thro' the streets, and bath'd their swords in blood.
The *Hebrews*, pleas'd with this successful fate,
Sprung furious on, and forc'd the palace gate:

Fierce *Simon* thro' the bright apartments flew, So fell
 And old and young, without distinction, flew. Of Jacob's well

Shechem, with restless passion still inspir'd,
 Was with the charming *Israelite* retir'd;
 And first by mad insulting *Levi* found,
 Without a pause he gave the desp'rate wound.
 Take thy dispatch curst ravisher for hell,
 He said, and down the bleeding victim fell:
 His fatal mistress turns away her eyes,
 With horror seiz'd, and trembling with surprise,
 The swains her roving vanity upbraid,
 And to their tents the penitent convey'd.

Their father griev'd, reproves the bloody fact,
 But *Judab* thus defends the hostile act.

Should they, a race uncircumcis'd and vile,
 With lawless mixtures *Abram's* stock defile?
 Our wives and sisters in our sight constrain;
 While we, regardless of the shameful stain,
 Stand tamely by, and scarce of wrong complain?
 They first intrench'd on hospitable trust,
 And human faith;—our vengeance is but just.

Such justice never mingle with my fame,
 Good *Israel* cries, nor spot my guiltless name!
 The realms around, who idol Gods revere
 Will this black deed with indignation hear;
 And all their policy and rage unite,
 To blot our odious mem'ry from the light.

So hell believ'd; — but heav'n a sacred dread
 Of *Jacob's* sons among the nations spread;
 While he at *Bethel* with a pious flame,
 Implores the great *unutterable Name*.
 From thence to *Mamre's* peaceful plain retires,
 Where *Kiriath-arba* lifts her golden spires;
 Illustrious *Arba* built and nam'd the place,
 The boasted father of the giant race;
 For them design'd the monstrous plan appear'd,
 To heav'n the threat'ning battlements were rear'd.
 In careless joys and plenty here they live,
 And to the neighb'ring swains protection give.

Beneath the hill, on which their city stood,
 Ascended high a venerable wood;
 The solemn shades, which gave a secret dread,
 Conceal'd a vaulted structure for the dead,
Machpelah call'd, with wondrous labour wrought;
 This *Abram* of the giant nation bought:
 The cave, the wood, the springs, and bord'ring field,
Ephron, their prince, by publick contract seal'd.

Here to their purchas'd right the shepherds drive
 Their fleecy charge, and unmolested live;
 While frequent thro' the consecrated ground,
 Inscriptions and old monuments they found.
 Where'er celestial visions had appear'd,
 The pious worshippers an altar rear'd;
 The mystick name to mortals long unknown,
 Was deeply figur'd on the polish'd stone;
 By marks engrav'd on arching rocks, 'twas seen,
 That heavenly pow'rs had there convers'd with men.

Remote

Remote from this a lofty pillar stood;
 This *Jacob* to the rural concourse shew'd;
 Here see, he said, the memory retain'd
 Of *Abram's* conquest near *Damascus* gain'd.

To distant lands the *Eastern* rule was spread,
 And *Jordan's* banks a yearly tribute paid:
 The king of *Sodom* first contemn'd the yoke,
Admah and *Zeboim* next the treaty broke.
 At this the royal *Elamite* enrag'd,
 The neighb'ring kings, his great allies, engag'd;
Arioch and mighty *Tidal* join their force,
 Conquest where'er they turn attends their course.
 The *Horims* on mount *Seir* their valour prove,
 Their troops the *Emims* from their fortrefs drove.

In *Siddim's* vale the adverse princes stay,
 There *Shibna*, *Bera* and *Shemeber* lay.
Amraphel early meets his doubtful foes,
 And for the victory his ranks dispose;
 But scarce th'encounter could be call'd a fight,
 So soon the troops of *Sodom* took their flight:
 The coward race, unus'd to charge a foe,
 Their jav'lins, swords and shields at once forego.
 Some seek the woods, and some a shelt'ring cave;
 Some in the rocks their breath, inglorious, save.
 While others plunging down fair *Jordan's* tide,
 From the stern looks of war their faces hide.
 Th'invaders sheath their swords, and scorn to grace
 With martial deaths the despicable race.
Bera alone and *Lot* sustain'd the field,
 But press'd by numbers were compell'd to yield:

These,

These, with the riches of the town, a prey
To *Paran's* hills the conqu'rors bore away.

This *Abram* heard, and gather'd on the plain
A valiant band, his own domestick train :
His glad assistance *Esbeol* brings, a youth
Of publick honour, and unblemish'd truth :
With *Aner*, *Mamre*, dauntless both and young,
Brothers, all three from noble *Amor* sprung.

'Twas night, secure the victor army lies,
Scornful of foes, and fearless of surprise ;
By Heav'n's command a sudden vapour spreads
O'er all the host, and clouds their drowsy heads ;
To the high throne of sense soft slumber climbs,
Slackens their sinews, and benumbs their limbs ;
The captives eyes alone its force repel'd,
Nor to the pleasing violence would yield.

Now near the camp the brave Confed'rates draw,
And by the glimm'ring fires its posture saw :
The foremost rank, the swift invaders flew,
And soon the waking pris'ners heard and knew
Their active friends, that to their succour flew.
Abram his nephew, he the rest unt'y'd ;
The sleeping foe avenging swords supply'd :
From file to file the fearless brothers pass,
And leave them breathless on the purple grass.
'Th' old patriarch feels new life in ev'ry vein,
And scatters wide destruction o'er the plain :
The terror grows, the clash of arms, and cries
Of wounded men afflict the ambient skies,

Prince *Arioch*, startled at the noise, awakes,
 And from his eyes the fatal slumber shakes.
 At oft-repeated calls his legions arm,
 And madly haste to meet the loud alarm;
 But by a force more prevalent out-done,
 On certain fate with eager steps they run;
 Disorder'd and amaz'd, they quit the field,
 And, raving, to their unknown victors yield.

The morning rose, and with her blushing light
 Expos'd their damage, and inglorious flight;
 The joyful shepherds seize th' abandon'd spoils;
 And now returning from their martial toils,
 A royal priest at *Salem Abram* meets,
 With presents, and a benediction greets
 The *Hebrew* bands :—— To heav'n he lifts his eyes,
 And blest be that propitious pow'r, he cries,
 Who walks the crystal circuit of the skies;
 Who hears the boasts of mortals with disdain,
 Contemns their force, and makes their triumphs vain!
 His mien was solemn, and his face divine,
 Refulgent gems around his temples shine:
 His graceful robe, a bright celestial blue,
 Trailing behind, a train majestick drew.
 The tenth of all great *Abram* gives the priest,
 The Kings and *Amorites* divide the rest.
 Ail pleas'd, the gen'rous conqu'ror loudly prais'd,
 And to his fame this lasting column rais'd.

The swains were list'ning still, when *Jacob* cries,
 To yonder mountain now direct your eyes,
 For there a brighter scene of glory lies.

'Twas there the wond'ring fun in *Abram* view'd
The noblest height of human fortitude ;
The pious man in guiltless sleep lay drown'd,
When thro' his ears thunder'd this fatal sound.

Arise, and *Isaac* on mine altar lay,
With thy own hand the destin'd victim slay.
He starts, and cries, who can this thought inspire ?
Can heav'n this monstrous sacrifice require ?

The dreadful call again surpris'd his ears,
And lo ! the well-known heavenly form appears.
He bow'd, and at the purple dawn arose,
And with his darling to *Moriah* goes.
Astonish'd long he by the altar stood,
Then pil'd with trembling hands the sacred wood ;
Half dead himself ; the wond'ring youth he binds,
Who now his fire's severe intention finds.

What thoughts, he ask'd, my father, have possess'd
Your soul ? what horrid fury fills your breast ?
Am I to hell a sacrifice design'd ?
Some cruel demon must your reason blind ;
Th' unblemish'd skies abhor this bloody deed,
No human victims on their altars bleed.

'Tis heavn, the Patriarch said, this fact requires,
'Tis heav'n—be witness yon ethereal fires !
Yet, countless as the stars, from thee must spring
Victorious nations, and the *mystick King* :
'Tis past relief—yet by himself he swore,
Who from the dead thy relicks can restore ;
What obstacle surmounts almighty pow'r ?

This said, the pious youth resign'd his life ;
 Blest *Abram* shook off all paternal strife,
 And forward thrust the consecrated knife.
 As lightning from the skies, an angel broke,
 And warded with his hand the fatal stroke ;
 When thus a voice streams downward from above,
 Breathing divine beneficence and love.

By my great self I swear, to bless thy race
 With endless favour, and peculiar grace ;
 Thy scepter'd sons the spacious *East* shall sway,
 While vanquish'd kings obedient tribute pay.

Here *Jacob* ends, and to his tent retires ;
 Their fleecy charge the parting swains requires.





B O O K III.

The infernal Powers endeavour to raise Factions in Jacob's Family. Joseph's Dreams. His Brother's Jealousy and Malice. He comes to Dothan. They confine him in a Pit while they consult his Ruin. An Angel in a Vision presages to him his future greatness, and warns him of the snares of Beauty and unlawful Love. His Brothers spare his Life, and sell him to the Midian Merchants travelling with their spicy Traffick into Egypt. Jacob, obstinate in Grief, refuses all Consolation.

MEAN time the Pagan deities, displeas'd
To find the public storms so soon appeas'd,
Studious attempt by new malicious ways,
Among the *Hebrews* civil jars to raise :
Moloch already had provok'd the strife,
And kindling mischief threatens *Joseph's* life.

The lovely youth, fair *Rachel's* boasted son,
Compleatly form'd, his seventeenth year begun ;
His mother's sparkling eyes, and blooming grace,
Mixt with severer strokes, adorn'd his face.
Not he that in *Sabea's* fragrant grove,
(As poets sung) inflam'd the queen of love ;
Nor *Hylas*, nor *Narcissus* look'd so gay,
When the clear streams his rosy blush display.

In all his conduct something noble shone,
 Which meant him for a greatness yet unknown.
 Visions had oft' his rising fate foretold :
 The last to *Jacob* thus his lips unfold,
 His brethren by :— when sleep had clos'd mine eyes,
 A corny field before my fancy flies ;
 (Still to my thoughts the yellow crop appears!)
 My brothers with me reap'd the bending ears,
 Industrious each a single sheaf had bound,
 When theirs with sudden motion mine surround,
 And bow'd with prostrate rev'rence to the ground.
 But now my mind of rural business clear'd,
 Above my head a wond'rous scene appear'd :
 The moon and stars at highest noon shone bright,
 Unconquer'd by the sun's superior light ;
 Methought I saw the gaudy orbs descend,
 And at my feet with humble homage bend.

The shepherds hear his story with surprise :
 Must we thy vassals be & proud *Assur* cries,
 With rage and threatening malice in his eyes,

At *Mamre*, *Jacob* and his fav'rite stay,
 The rest to *Dothan*'s flow'ry meadows stray ;
 Infernal envy all their bosoms fires,
 And black resolves and horrid thoughts inspires.
 At last young *Joseph*'s murder is design'd :
 Hell with the monstrous treachery combin'd.

He comes to *Dothan*, by his father sent,
 And heav'n alone his ruin can prevent.

Their guiltless prey he stands, without defence,
But inborn worth, and fearless innocence.
His brethren's crimes, his father's hoary hairs
Were all the subject that alarm'd his fears.

The fatal stroke they now prepare to give,
When *Reuben's* arts the hopeless youth retrieve,
By thus advising, — let your brother live.
A thousand easy methods yet remain,
To render all his glorious projects vain;
But till we have determin'd the design,
To yonder pit th' aspiring boy confine.
To him they yield, and to their tents retire,
The fiends below their own success admire.

The night prevails, and draws her sable train,
With silent pace, along the ethereal plain.
By fits the dancing stars exert their beams;
The silver crescent glimmers on the streams;
The sluggish waters, with a drowsy roar,
And ling'ring motion, roll along the shore;
Their murmur answers to the rustling breeze,
That faintly whispers thro' the nodding trees;
The peaceful echoes, undisturb'd with sound,
Lay slumb'ring in the cavern'd hills around;
Frenzy and faction, love and envy slept;
A still solemnity all nature kept;
Devotion only wak'd, and to the skies
Directs the pris'ner's pious vows and eyes:
To God's high throne a wing'd petition flew,
And from the skies commission'd *Gabriel* drew;

One of the seven, who by appointed turns
Before the throne ambrosial incense burns.

A sudden day, returning on the night,
Vanquish'd the shades, and put the stars to flight;
Th'enlighten'd cave receives the shining guest,
In all his heav'nly pomp divinely dress'd;
He greets the youth, and thus his charge express'd.

To-morrow thou must leave rich *Jordan's* shore,
And trace *Moriab's* sacred hill no more;
A great and grateful nation yet unknown,
Sav'd by thy care, shall thee their patron own;
But let thy breast impenetrable prove
To wanton beauty, and forbidden love:
This heav'n enjoins.—The wond'ring shepherd bow'd;
The angel mounted on a radiant cloud.

The morning now her lovely face display'd,
And with a rosy smile dispell'd the shade.
The faction rose, and close in council sat,
On means that must determine *Joseph's* fate;
Nor long they sat, for on the neighb'ring road
A train of camels with their spicy load,
Follow'd by *Midian* merchants, travell'd by:
Heav'n marks the way, the envious brothers cry;
Whate'er th'ambitious dreamer's thoughts portend,
His hopes with these to foreign lands we'll send.

They stop the *Midianites*, and soon agree,
Resolv'd no more his hated face to see.

With looks, which perfect inward anguish tell,
And falling tears, he took this sad farewell.

I go to wander on some barb'rous clime,
May heav'nly justice ne'er avenge this crime!
Be still indulgent to my father's age,
His grief for me with flatt'ring hopes assuage.

They hear, they see the anguish of his soul,
And scarce their struggling pity can control;
Touch'd with so sad a scene, they all begin
To feel remorse for this unnatural sin,
And half repent: but hate and envy prove
Their victor passions, and repress their love.
They form a specious fraud to hide the deed
From their old sire, and in the plot succeed.
Their brother's varied coat they still retain'd,
And with a bleeding kid the vestment stain'd;
With this to *Mamre* treach'rous *Simeon* goes,
Too well the lost old-man the relick knows.
After a dismal pause, his sorrow breaks
Its violent way, and this sad language speaks.

My son!—alas, some savage monster's prey!
Why have I liv'd to this detested day?
Why have I lingred thus? I should have dy'd,
When thy more happy mother left my side,
My best-lov'd wife:—but all my *Rachel's* face
I could in thy resembling features trace.
Tormenting thought!—O hide me from the light!
Its useless rays afflict my feeble sight;

Come lead me to the solitary grave,
 Despair and woe that dark retirement crave;
 There shall I, stretch'd upon my dusty bed,
 Forget the toils of life, and mingle with the dead.

In vain his friends attempt to bring relief,
 In vain persuade inexorable grief;
 'Tis deep, and intermingled with his soul,
 Nor time, nor counsel can its force control.





B O O K IV.

A Description of Egypt, with the Pyramids. Joseph sold by the Midian Merchants to a Captain of the Royal Guards. He leads him to his Palace. Shews his Wife the handsome Captive. Her growing Passion for him. A young Assyrian Maid endeavouring to amuse and divert her Mistress, tells her the Story of Ninus and Semiramis.

MEAN while thro' savage woods, and desarts vast,
The captive with his *Midian* masters past.
At last rich *Egypt's* pleasant coasts are seen,
The level meads drest with immortal green ;
Between them fertile *Nile* directs his course,
And nobly flows from his immortal source.
Along the borders of the sacred flood,
Aspiring groves and stately cities stood :
Here ancient *Tanais* in her height appear'd,
Before *Amphion's* lute the *Theban* wall had rear'd.

The sun's devoted city, radiant *On*,
With roofs emboss'd, and golden foliage shone ;
Ere skilful *Vulcan* was at *Lemnos* nam'd,
Or *Cynthia's* darts, or shields for *Pallas* fram'd.

Distinct from these, on the *Pelusian* strands,
Anfana crown'd with silver turrets stands ;

Rais'd

[24] *The History of Joseph.*

Rais'd to its height, as old tradition tells,
By pow'rful magick, and secur'd by spells :
Th'*Egyptian* wizards here themselves immure,
Converse with hell, and practise rites impure.

Now mighty pyramids the sight surprise,
On *Masre's* plain the spiral tow'rs arise.
Redoufa here magnificently shrouds
Its lofty head among surrounding clouds :
By *Saurid* built, the daring structure flood
The fury of the universal flood.
Phacat and *Samir's* pointed tops ascend,
And o'er the fields their length'ning shades extend ;
Their compass sacred to the dead remain,
Within eternal night and silence reign ;
No lightfom ray salutes them from the sky,
But glaring lamps depending from on high,
With sickly gleams the hollow space supply.
Here ancient kings, embalm'd with wond'rous cost,
A long exemption from corruption boast :
In artful figures some are sitting plac'd,
With fruitless pomp, and idle ensigns grac'd ;
While others stretch'd in sleeping postures lie,
On folding carpets of imperial dye :
Their hov'ring ghosts, pleas'd with this mimic pride,
Among the breathless carcases reside,
But what prodigious things within were shewn,
Were to the *Hebrew* stranger yet unknown,
Astonish'd at their outward bulk alone.

And now arriv'd where *Zoan's* wall inclos'd
Imperial tow'rs, the *Midianites* expos'd

Their fragrant traffick, with the handsom slave :
His mind beyond his years compos'd and grave ;
His aspect something spoke divinely great,
Something that mark'd him for a nobler fate.

A generous captain, chief of *Pharaoh's* bands,
Admiring much the graceful captive, stands,
Then gives the *Midianites* their full demands.
A sudden friendship in his breast he finds,
Experienc'd only by unvulgar minds :
Some heav'nly being had prepar'd his thought,
And on his heart the kind impression wrought.

Without regret, young stranger, follow me,
Said *Potiphar*, I now have ransom'd thee ;
From servitude this moment thou art free.

The youth receiv'd the favour with a grace,
That answer'd all the promise of his face.

Fronting the royal house, a structure crown'd
With turrets stood, and palmy groves around ;
Discoursing, hither thro' the walks they went,
Both pleas'd alike, and equally content.

The seat they reach'd, when for a costly vest
The master call'd ; in this the youth they dress'd :
No more disparag'd with a slave's attire,
His faultless shape and features all admire.
His hair, like palest amber, from his crown
In floating curls and shining waves fell down.

Young *Paris* such surprising charms display'd,
 When first in gold and *Tyrian* silks array'd,
 He laid his crook aside, forgot the swain,
 And bid adieu to *Ida's* flow'ry plain.

Then for his wife the captain bids them send,
 And shews with boasting joy his purchas'd friend.

The fair *Sabrina*, lately made his bride,
 Was in her beauty's celebrated pride.
 Her large black eyes shone with a sprightly fire,
 And love at ev'ry fatal glance inspire.
 The swarthy lustre of her charming face
 The full-blown lily and the rose disgrace.
 Her glossy hair outvy'd the raven's wings,
 And curl'd about her neck in wanton rings.
 Affectedly she took a careless view,
 And to her own apartment soon withdrew.

Joseph belov'd and happy long remain'd,
 And from his lord successive favours gain'd ;
 Who now at home grown prosp'rous, and abroad,
 Believes his guest some favourable god :
 He gives him o'er his house the full command,
 Intrusting all his treasures to his hand.

Mean time *Sabrina* feeds within her breast
 A secret fire, but shame its rage suppress,
 When first she saw the charming *Hebrew's* eyes,
 She felt, but well dissembled the surprise ;
 But thro' her various arts an inward care
 The languors of her pensive looks declare.

Cyrena found the change, (a Syrian maid,
Well-born, but from her native coasts betray'd :)
She saw the change, but led by nicer laws,
Was thoughtless still of its reproachful cause.
Her voice, her easy wit, her eloquence,
Could hold the wildest passion in suspense.
Attending oft' her mistress to a grove,
Their usual walk with pleasing tales she strove
To entertain her thoughts, and charm her grief;
Nor fail'd her arts to give a short relief.
Her native clime the pleasing subject proves,
The Syrian pomp, their customs, and their loves :
Among the rest *Sabrina* hears her name
Semiramis, a queen of ancient fame,
And ask'd her now the story to relate ;
Repos'd beneath a spreading palm they sat.





B O O K V.

The Story of Semiramis, expos'd, when an Infant, in the Fields ; where she is found, (covered with a rich embroidered Mantle) by a Peasant, who carries her to Simma, the Chief of the King's Shepherds, by whom she is married to Menon, the principal Commander of the Assyrian Forces. Menon being called to the Siege of Bactria, she follows him in a martial Disguise. Menon discovers her Sex to the King, who marries her after the Death of Menon.

TH E maid begins. — Where fam'd Coaspen
laves

Rich Elam's borders with his sacred waves,
Along the fields their tents the shepherds spread,
By them the king's unnumber'd flocks were fed.

The silent dawn was misty yet and gray,
And hoary moisture on the mountains lay.

Intent on rural cares, with early haste,
A peasant near a rocky cavern past ;
Across his path was rais'd a mossy bed,
O'er that a rich embroider'd mantle spread ;
This, lifted up, reveal'd a lovely child,
Which fairer than the rosy morning smil'd :

The

The wond'ring swain forgot his country cares,
And back to *Simma's* house the infant bears.

Simma his master was, tho' wealthy, just :
The royal lands and flocks were made his trust ;
He riches still amass'd without an heir,
And seeing now the child surpassing fair,
He took and bred her with indulgent care :
In nothing he controls her growing years,
No cost to please her boundless fancy spares :

When, by revolving moons, successive time
Had brought her beauty to its perfect prime,
Her shape was faultless, and in all her mien
Presaging marks of majesty were seen :
No mortal e'er could boast so fair a face,
Such radiant eyes, and so divine a grace.
A flow'ry wreath her beauteous temples crown'd,
Her snowy vest a crimson girdle bound :
Thus dress'd, she walks a goddess o'er the plains,
Admir'd and lov'd by all the gazing swains ;
To her the fragrant tribute of the spring,
With am'rous zeal on bended knees they bring.

Not distant far from wealthy *Simma's* seat,
Heroick *Menon* own'd a fair retreat ;
His rank, and early worth, the high command
Of all the fam'd *Affyrian* force had gain'd :
In peaceful times the chief whom all admir'd,
To prove a softer happiness, retir'd ;
'Twas here *Semiramis* his wishes fir'd,

With ravish'd eyes her heav'nly face he view'd,
 And for the glorious prize to *Simma* sa'd ;
 Proffer'd with sacred rites his vows to bind :
 This honour pleas'd the haughty virgin's mind ;
 On meaner terms she had his suit deny'd ;
 With virtue guarded and a noble pride,
 The lover finds success, but all his joys
 A sudden summons from the king destroys.

Babaria revolts, *Ninus* the tidings hears,
 Himself in arms to meet the foe prepares.
 But three short days ungentle fate allows
 Sad *Menon*, for his sighs and parting vows :
 He curst his martial charge, and publick fame,
 And loaths th' incumbrance of a glorious name,
 Which rends him now from all the joys of life,
 His lov'd *Semiramis*, his charming wife.

She hears the king's command with less surprise,
 And, *Menon*, banish all your care, she cries :
 We cannot——'tis impossible to part,
 Love with heroick courage fires my heart.
 To follow you thro' raging seas I'd go,
 O'er burning desarts, or perpetual snow.
 By your example led, I shall not fear
 The flying arrow, or the pointed spear ;
 Pierc'd with a fatal dart, were *Menon* by,
 'Twould be a soft, an easy thing, to die.
 Th' event be what it will, with you I'll run
 To certain death, nor any danger shun ;
 Be witness to my vows thou radiant sun !

Nor can th' advent'rous deed my conduct stain,
Secure with you the secret shall remain ;
I boldly can defy all other eyes,
In threat'ning armour, and a martial guise.

New pleasure fills the hero's breast, to find
Such beauty, love, and stedfast virtue join'd.
A thousand kind transporting things he said,
A thousand vows of lasting passion made :
Then for a rich habiliment of war
He sent, and dress'd himself the smiling fair.

A costly helmet gliter'd on her head,
On which a dove its silver pinions spread ;
A plume of whitest feathers danc'd above,
With every trembling breath of air they move.
Th' embroider'd scarf that o'er her armour flow'd,
With dazzling flames of gold and scarlet glow'd.
Her hand a javelin shook with mimic pride,
A painted quiver rattled by her side.
Her height and mien adorn the warlike dress,
More vig'rous rays her charming eyes express.
The courser, of his beauteous burden proud,
With golden trappings bounded thro' the crowd.

Menon, of *Syrian* arms the grace and pride,
Kept near the lovely masquerader's side.
On *Dura's* plain the *Babylonian* force
In ranks attend their mighty leader's course.
While *Ninus*, graceful as a martial god,
Exalted on his glittering chariot rode.

The *Bactrians* their approaching foes disdain,
 Resolv'd their fortress bravely to maintain;
 And long the town with matchless courage held,
 And oft' to flight th' *Armenian* troops compell'd:
 'Till bold *Semiramis*, who danger sought,
 And fearless in the foremost ranks had fought,
 Observ'd a rock, which o'er a castle lean'd;
 The *Bactrians* this were careless to defend,
 Believing it from all access secure:
 She finds a path among the cliffs obscure;
 Then with a chosen band intrepid gains
 The top, and soon the unguarded fort obtains.
 The town thus made the fierce besieger's prey,
 To her they gave the conquest of the day.
 All prais'd the youth, (for such she was believ'd)
 Her bold address each party had deceiv'd;
 But *Ninus* most her fortitude admires,
 He views her blooming youth, her race enquires.

Menon in dotage lost, with foolish pride,
 No more the fatal secret strives to hide;
 Nor once imagin'd this unlucky boast,
 The joy of all his future life must cost.
Ninus with other eyes her beauty views,
 In other terms his gratitude renews.

To *Babylon* return'd, he yet conceal'd
 His growing flame, by *Menon*'s worth withheld;
 Too well he with a sad Reflexion knows,
 What to his counsel, and his sword he owes:
 These gen'rous ties at first his love oppose;

But nothing can th' increasing rage restrain ;
By gentle means he yet his end would gain.

And long the town with matchless courage held,
Menon, he said, my wishes to procure,
I'll give thee cities, and a boundless store
Of gold, and precious gems ; and for a bride,
A blooming princess to the crown ally'd ;
All this, and more, to gain her love I'll give ;
Without *Semiramis* I cannot live.

Resenting *Menon*, with a handsom pride,
Refus'd his offers, and the suit deny'd.

The softer sex he next attempts to gain ;
She too rejects his passion with disdain.
What now avail the glories of the *East* ?
Nor wealth, nor empire can procure his rest.
Tir'd with unheeded sighs, and fruitless pray'r,
He tries more rig'rous means to ease his care ;
And threatens thus :——With my desires comply,
Or soon prepare to see your hero die.

From *Menin* this she hides, who less severe
Observes her to the am'rous king appear :
His fondness with the jealous passion grows ;
No joy, no lightsom interval he knows,
The mingled frenzy gives him no repose.

She false ! he cries, my fair, enchanting wife !
And can I yet protract this wretched life ;
This anxious heart, with hopeless grief oppress'd,
In death's cold shade shall find perpetual rest,

He said ; then all the hostile stars defy'd,
And plung'd the fatal weapon in his side.

A long adieu ! *Semiramis*, he cries ;
With those lov'd accents on his lips he dies ;
She hears the parting groan, and to his succour flies.
Sunk on the floor she sees her lover bleed,
Himself the author of the barb'rous deed ;
But true to love, and virtue's strictest laws,
She neither knew, nor could suspect the cause.
Seiz'd with a sudden horror and surprise,
She faints, and near the breathless carcase lies ;
Her frightened women to her rescue haste,
And wake the doubtful spark of life, at last.
A hollow groan ensues ; with feeble sight
She meets the day, and loaths the flashing light.
A stedfast sorrow in her face appears,
Above the soft relief of female tears ;
Silent as death, her words no utterance find,
To tell the inward anguish of her mind :
A fixt, sedate, and rational despair
Compos'd her looks, and settled in her air.

In such a fullen calm the billows sleep,
So smooth an aspect wears the gloomy deep ;
While treach'rous winds their gath'ring breath refrain,
Presaging tempests on the troubled main.

Th' impatient prince with just respect attends
Her ebbing grief, and long his flame suspends ;
And long her stedfast thoughts relentless prove
To proffer'd empire, and inviting love :

Till fate itself her stubborn heart inclin'd
To take a crown, by all the stars design'd,
And fill a sphere proportion'd to her mind.

Ninus was now of ev'ry wish possess'd,
With sov'reign rule, and brighter pleasure blest :
But ah ! how short a boast has mortal joy ?
What sudden storms the flatt'ring calm destroy ?
What human privilege, what lawless pow'r
Can one short day retard th' appointed hour ?

Thrice thro' the midnight silence, from the ground,
The startled monarch hears a warning sound ;
Thrice *Menon's* ghost a frowning spectre stands,
And seems to beckon with his airy hands.
A sudden faintness seiz'd his trembling heart,
While hasty life retires from every part ;
Speechless and pale his eye-balls roll in death,
While with reluctant pangs he yields his breath.

The mournful princess to his merit just,
With wond'rous pomp interr'd the royal dust :
High on a mount his sepulchre she plac'd,
With marble spires, and pointed arches grac'd.
She bids farewell to love's deceitful flame ;
Resolv'd to leave behind a glorious name,
In costly structures of immortal fame.

A lofty dome to *Belus* first she built :
The inward roof with dazling silver gilt ;
The god was fashion'd in a wond'rous mold,
With perfect art ; his bulk was massy gold ;

His sacred utensils were all the same,
While fragrant oils in golden sockets flame.

In marble basins of an equal row

Old *Babel* next with boundless cost she wall'd;
And *Babylon* the spacious city call'd;
Its bounds with forts and battlements were crown'd,
And compass'd in an endless tract of ground,
Valleys and level'd hills the vast extent surround;
Where fronting ranks of palaces were seen,
With streams, and groves, and painted meads be-
tween.

Euphrates in its course the town divides,
While thro' the midst his stately current glides.
Around the place a hundred gates unfold,
Thro' which a hundred glitt'ring chariots roll'd;
Which all for state attend the queen's commands,
When she her progress makes thro' distant lands.
Resolv'd to visit now the neighb'ring *Medes*,
Her train she o'er the lofty *Sagris* leads.

At pompous *Ecbatana* now she staid,
And all her own magnificence display'd.
Gay projects here employ'd her active mind,
Gardens, and seats of pleasure she design'd;
Luxurious nature with her art combin'd.

Not far from thence a plain extended lay,
With stately groves and flow'ry verdure gay;
The spreading palm, the cedar, and the pine,
Arch'd above their mingled branches join'd.

Semiramis now turns an ancient flood,
With matchless labour, thro' the charming wood,

The plenteous stream in various rills divides,
 While marble bounds confine the crystal sides;
 In marble basons of an equal row,
 Myrtle, and balm, and flow'ry *Cassia* grow.
 Prodigious rocks intire were hither brought,
 Smooth arches thro' their craggy sides were wrought:
 Here artificial hills their summits rear,
 For shade retiring grotts around appear.
 In various bloom the valleys stood below,
 From far the beauteous *Syrian* roses glow.
 All that perfumes the blest *Sabæan* fields
 Grows here, with all that sacred *Nysa* yields.
 Here breath'd the fragrant *Calamus*, and *Fir*,
Cinnamon, *Frankincense*, and weeping *Myrrhe*.
 Shrill birds among the spicy branches sing,
 Their warbling notes along the valleys ring:
 The winds and waters with a gentle noise
 Double the sound, and answer ev'ry voice.

The queen a while had these diversions prov'd,
 And then her court to *Babylon* remov'd:
 But ah! what heights of happiness are free
 From fickle chance, or certain destiny?
 The princess finds a swift decay control
 The usual force and vigour of her soul;
 Nor struggling nature could its force repel,
 While heav'n and earth the publick change foretel.

She from the oracle enquires th' event,
 The flatt'ring priests this pleasing answer sent:
 That from the Gods she drew her heav'nly race,
 And shortly must th' immortal number grace.

Pleas'd

Pleas'd with the glories of her future state,
She yields without reluctance to her fate.

Cyrena ends her tale ; the closing day
Withdrew its splendour, and forbid their stay.





B O O K VI.

Joseph's Mistress at last discovers her criminal Passion to him, but is repuls'd. She complains to her Nurse, who vainly tries the Force of Spells. She is sent by her Mistress to Harpinus. His Cell described. He consults the Planets, and flatters her with Success; till finding the Hebrew Youth inflexible to all her Charms, she falsely accuses him to his Master by whom he is confined to a Prison.

S T I L L with impatient love *Sabrina* pines,
And now to speak the fatal truth designs ;
Sooth'd by her own indulgent hopes, which trace
A secret passion in the *Hebrew's* face.
He sighs, and when he thinks himself alone,
Oft seems some new misfortune to bemoan,
In foreign Accents, and a tongue unknown.
Her vanity an explanation found,
And put a sense on every flatt'ring sound,
Forgetful of her nuptial vows and fame,
She fondly thus betrays her guilty flame.

If yet my torments are to thee unknown,
If yet my sighs the myst'ry have not shewn,
Insensible, — let this confession prove
The strange excess, and grandeur of my love.

Yet

Yet had I still my wild desires suppress'd,
Had not thine eyes an equal flame confess'd.

Let me be punish'd with the last disdain,
He said, if e'er I harbour'd thoughts so vain!
I ne'er *Sabrina's* favour so abus'd,
Nor once your virtue in my heart accus'd.
Should I perfidious (heav'n forbid!) offend
My gen'rous master, ——— I might say my friend;
Let scandal sink my name, when so unjust
I prove, so false to hospitable trust!

Thus with a modest turn he would reclaim
Her am'rous frenzy, and conceal her shame;
Nor waits her leave, but hastily withdrew.
Careless her limbs upon a couch she threw,
And curst her folly with a thousand tears;
Till *Iphicle*, her artful nurse, appears:
Of so much grief she press'd to know the cause,
At last the secret from her mistress draws.

You wrong, the *Beldam* cries, your own desert,
For you have charms, the youth a human heart.
Your beauty might a savage breast inspire,
At sight of you the coldest age takes fire.
But where's the wonder that a bashful boy,
Should, at the first address, be nice and coy?
He loves no doubt, and languishes like you,
But fears th' ambitious motive to pursue:
Nor shall your utmost wishes want redress,
I have a draught that gives divine success;

Nepenthe,

Nepenthe, which th' immortals quaff above ;
 'These sacred drops rewarded *Chemis*' love.

When *Totis*, by his death, the full command
 Of *Misraim* left in fair *Charoba*'s hand,
 The rich *Gebirus* from *Chaldea* came
 With foreign pomp to seek the royal dame.
Chemis adorn'd his train, whose charming face
 Allur'd a goddess of the wat'ry race ;
 On *Nilus*' banks the young *Chaldean* stood,
 When lo ! *Merina* rising from the flood,
 Her chariot set with pearl, the wave divides,
 Softly along the silver stream she glides.
 Her robes with pearl and sparkling rubies shine,
 Her brighter eyes express a light divine.
 Nor from her humid bed the blooming day
 Has e'er ascended with a clearer ray.
 Her smiles the raging tempests could appease,
 Allay the winds, and calm the swelling seas.
 She leaves her crystal vaults, and coral groves,
 Her liquid kingdoms, and immortal loves,
 And o'er the grassy meads with *Chemis* roves.
 At parting gave him this celestial spell,
 Which ev'ry good procures, and can each ill repel.
 My mother from this youth derives her line,
 And this she left me, as a gift divine,
 By all her ancestors preserv'd with care ;
 One heav'nly drop shall banish your despair.

Her flatt'ring nurse's charm she vainly tries,
 For *Joseph* still her hateful passion flies :

But obstinate in love to gain her ends,
To fam'd *Anfana Iphicle* she sends.

Harpinus there an uncouth dwelling own'd,
Planted with yew and mournful cypress round;
Whose shadows every pleasing thought control,
And fill with deep anxiety the soul.
Hither black fiends at dead of night advance,
The horned *Serim* thro' the darkness dance:
From earth, from air, and from the briny deep
They come, and here nocturnal revels keep.
From gloomy *Acherusa*, and the fen
Of *Serbon*, and the forest of *Birdone*;
From *Ophiodes*, the serpent isle, they come,
And *Syrtes*, where fantastick spectres roam;
From *Cbabnus*, and the wild *Psebarian* peak,
Whose hoary cliffs the clouds long order break,

In hellish banquets, and obscene delights,
The curst assembly here consume the nights.
The sick'ning moon her feeble light withholds,
In sable clouds her argent horns she folds;
The constellations quench their glimm'ring fire,
And frighted far to distant skies retire.

Amidst these horrors, in his echoing cells,
And winding vaults, the Necromancer dwells:
Passing from room to room, the brazen doors
Resound, as when exploded thunder roars.
The day excluded thence, blue sulphur burns,
With frightful splendour, in a thousand urns.

The Wizard here employs his mighty spells,
And great events by divination tells;
Inscribing mystick figures on the ground,
And mutt'ring words of an unlawful sound;
Which from their tombs the shiv'ring ghosts compel,
And force them future secrets to reveal.
The stars he knew, when adverse, or benign;
When with malignant influence they shine,
Or, darting prosp'rous rays, to love incline.

The nurse a pleasing answer here obtain'd,
And thus *Sabrina's* drooping thoughts sustain'd.
The third succeeding day shall crown your love,
And every am'rous star propitious prove.

Sabrina feeds the while her guilty flame,
And now the third appointed morning came;
When for the favour'd youth in haste she sends:
The message with reluctance he attends.
Silent she sits; while waiting her commands,
Fix'd at a formal distance long he stands.
Her eyes still fix'd on *Joseph's* beauteous face;
A close contempt, and inward hatred trace;
Yet desp'rate to compleat her own disgrace.

Ungrateful youth! she cries, too well I find
By these cold looks, thy unrelenting mind,
Thy savage temper, and unconquer'd pride,
By words of sacred import thou wouldst hide,
Thou talk'st of holy ties, and rules severe,
Pretending some avenging God to fear.

What God, alas! does cruelty command?
 Or human bliss maliciously withstand?
 Such thoughts as these the heav'nly powers arraign,
 Efface their goodness, and their justice stain,
 Would they the gen'rous principle control,
 Who gave this am'rous bias to the soul?
 What nature is, they made it: nor can bind
 With servile laws the freedom of the mind:
 Were this our lot, happy the brutal kind,
 That unmolested thro' the forest rove,
 Licentious in their choice, and unconfin'd in love!
 Virtue! — a meer imaginary thing!
 Torment it may, but can no pleasure bring.
 Honour! — 'tis nothing but precarious fame,
 For empty breath, for a fantastick name.
 Wilt thou my soft intreaties still deny,
 And see me languish, and unpity'd die?
 Consent at last to love's enchanting joys,
 While pleasure calls thee with her tempting voice:
 These folding curtains shall our bliss conceal,
 That no intruding eye our theft reveal.

Deluded fair! the noble youth replies,
 Could we some artful labyrinth devise
 To hide our sin, and far from mortal sight
 Retire, involv'd in all the shades of night;
 Yet there, — expos'd to heav'n's unclouded view,
 Its vengeance would our treachery pursue;
 Distinguish'd plagues would soon our guilt expose,
 While all your sex's glory you must lose.
 To *Potiphar* alone your vows belong,
 In him a tender lover you must wrong.

For me, where should I hide my hated face,
 Could I be conscious of a crime so base?
 No, let me thro' the yawning earth descend,
 Rather than with such insolence offend
 The laws of God, and kindness of my friend!
 My master's favours, endless to recite,
 When I with such ingratitude requite;
 When with a thought so horrid and prophane,
 My faith and spotless loyalty I stain;
 Let wrathful lightnings flashing round my head,
 And bolts of raging thunder strike me dead!
 Let execrations, and eternal shame
 Destroy my peace, and blast my hated name!

These words with such an awful air he spoke,
 Celestial virtue sparkling in his look,
 His haughty mistress all her hopes resign'd,
 And felt a diff'rent frenzy seize her mind:
 Assisting fiends the hellish thought suggest,
 And blot the tender passion from her breast.
 A crimson scarf with ornamental pride
 Was o'er his graceful shoulders loosely ty'd;
 This furiously she snatch'd, while from th' embrace
 He frees himself, and quits the hated place.

She call'd aloud, her voice *Cyrena* hears,
 And ent'ring saw her well-dissembled tears,
 A tale of proffer'd violence she feigns,
 And of the *Hebrew's* arrogance complains.
 Alarm'd at her repeated calls, she said,
 The monster left his curst design, and fled.

His scarf the truth confirm'd : her lord the while
Returns ; her words his easy faith beguile :
Blinded with rage he calls the injur'd youth,
And thus upbraids his violated truth.

How can'st thou, wretch ! belie a mind so base,
With that undaunted air, and guiltless face ?
Hypocrisy so steady and compleat,
A villain, cautious as thyself, might cheat ;
No wonder then thy practis'd faintly shews
Should on my honest artless mind impose.
My soul entire to thee I did resign ;
Except my bed, whate'er I had was thine.
In fetters let th'ungrateful slave be ty'd,
Some gloomy dungeon shall the monster hide.

Dungeons he said, and chains I can defy,
But would not, curst with your displeasure, die.
This sad reflexion aggravates my fate :
How shall I bear my gen'rous master's hate ?
Oh stay ! at last my vindication hear,
While by th' *Unutterable Name* I swear,
My thoughts are all from this injustice clear.

He ceas'd, and still *Sabrina's* shame conceals,
Nor one accusing word her fraud reveals.
Now to a damp unwholsom vault convey'd,
Joseph in ignominious chains is laid.

B O O K VII.

An Angel visits Joseph in Prison, and in a prophetic Vision shews him his own Advancement, and the future Fate of his Father's Posterity, their Bondage and miraculous Deliverance. The Keeper of the Ward convinc'd of Joseph's Innocence, treats him with great Esteem. The Dreams of his Fellow-Prisoners; and Joseph's Interpretation.

TWAS night, and now advanc'd the solemn hour;

The keeper of the prison, from his tow'r,
Astonish'd, sees a form divinely bright,
Smile thro' the shades, and dissipate the night;
With streaming splendor tracing all the way,
It enters where the new-come pris'ner lay.

Some God, he cries, who innocence defends,
Some God in that propitious light descends.
This stranger sure, whate'er the fact can be
Alledg'd against him, from the guilt is free.

The sacred vision to the youth appears,
His spirits with celestial fragrance cheers.
His heav'nly smiles would ev'n despair control,
And with immortal rapture fill the Soul.

His

His youthful brows a fair *Tiara* crown'd,
 A folding zone his gaudy vestments bound,
 Embroider'd high with *Amaranthus* round.
 Such wings th' *Arabian* Phoenix never wore,
 Sprinkled with gold and shading purple o'er.
 Beneficent his aspect and address,
 His lips seraphick harmony exprefs;
 His voice might stay th' invading sleep of death,
 While these soft words flow with his balmy breath.

From the unclouded realms of day above,
 From endless pleasures, and unbounded love,
 From painted fields deck'd with immortal flow'rs,
 From blissful valleys, and ethereal bow'rs,
 I come, commission'd by peculiar grace,
 With great presages to thy future race.

This *Gabriel* spoke; the pious *Hebrew's* breast
 Prophetick flame and pow'r divine confest;
 An awful silence, and profound suspense,
 Clos'd the tumultuous avenues of sense;
 The heav'nly trance, each wand'ring thought confin'd,
 Collects the operations of the mind,
 While *Gabriel* all the inward scene design'd.

Before him, rais'd to high dominion, all
 His humble brethren in prostration fall;
 His joyful eyes again his father see,
 He takes the blessing on his bended knee.
 Vastly in numbers *Jacob's* sons increas'd,
 Poor vassals by th' *Egyptians* are distress'd,
 And by a royal tyrant's yoke oppress'd:

To heav'n they cry, an aid that never fails,
Heav'n hears the cry, the potent pray'r prevails.

A mighty prophet, by divine command,
Does bold before the raging monarch stand,
And brings his great credentials in his hand.
Across the ground his wond'rous rod he throws ;
The rod transform'd a moving serpent grows,
Unfolds his speckled train, and o'er the pavement
flows.

A dazzling train of miracles ensue,
Which speak the prophet and his mission true.

The springs, the standing lakes, and running
flood,
His pow'rful word converts to reeking blood ;
The wounded billows stain the verdant shore,
Advancing slowly with a mournful roar.
Infernal night her sable wings extends,
And from the black unbottom'd deep ascends :
The seer denounces plagues on man and beast ;
Contagious torments soon the air infest ;
Aloud he bids a sudden tempest rise,
On rapid wings the storm obedient flies ;
Th' extended skies are rent from pole to pole,
Blue lightnings flash, and dreadful thunders roll.

Nor yet th' obdurate king the God reveres,
Whom ev'ry element obsequious fears ;
Till vengeful strokes of pow'r confess'd divine,
With clear, but terrible conviction shine.

The night was cover'd with unusual dread,
 While ev'ry star malignant influence shed,
 Pale spectres thro' the streets of Zoan roam,
 From sepulchres amazing echoes come;
 While, like a flaming meteor, down the skies,
 With threaten'ing speed the fatal angel flies.
 Reluctant justice, with a grace severe,
 Sits in his looks, and triumphs in his air.
 A crested helmet shades his awful brows;
 Behind his military vesture flows,
 And like an ev'ning's ruddy meteor glows.
 He grasps his sword, unsheath'd for certain fate,
 Destruction, death, and terror on him wait:
 Mortal the stroke, invisible the wound,
 While dying groans with mingled shrieks resound.
 From house to house the dreadful rumour runs,
 While wretched fathers mourn their first-born sons.

Th' alarm'd *Egyptians*, at the breaking day,
 Hurry the sacred multitude away:
 But *Pharaoh* soon his daring sin renews,
 Blaspheming loud the rescu'd slaves pursues;
 The fearful tribes stand trembling on the shore,
 The foe behind, a raging sea before.

Their glorious chief extends his pow'ful wand,
 And gives the mighty signal from the strand;
 Th' obedient waves the mighty signal take,
 And parting, crowd the distant surges back;
 On either hand, like crystal hills, they rise,
 Between a wide stupendous valley lies;

With

With joyful shouts the grateful *Hebrews* pass,
 Nor does the harden'd foe decline the chase;
 'Till heav'n's command the wat'ry chain dissolves,
 And in the whelming deep their pride involves.
 While *Israel* thro' the desert take their way,
 Led by a cloud which marches on by day,
 But resting cheer'd th' encamping host by night,
 With lambent flame, and unexampled light.

Where lofty *Sinai* shades the neighb'ring plain,
 Commanded now the sacred tribes remain;
 Prepar'd with mystick rites, to hear with awe,
 Their Saviour God pronounce their future law:
 Close bounds the mountain guard from all approach,
 That rashly none the hallow'd place might touch.

Reluctant see th' appointed morning rise,
 And fiery splendors glow around the skies.
 While from th' ethereal summit God descends,
 Beneath his feet the starry convex bends.
 His radiant form majestick darkness hides,
 While on a tempest rapid wings he rides.
 The trembling earth his awful presence owns,
 The forest flames, the cleaving desert groans,
 Each river back his wand'ring current calls,
 And rushing down the subterranean falls,
 To the profoundest caves affrighted flies,
 Reveal'd and bare each sandy channel lies.
 Their flatly heads the ancient mountains sink,
 And to a level with the vales would shrink;
 Again secure in their primæval beds,
 Beneath the waves would hide their fearful heads.

Old *Sinai* quakes at the tremendous weight,
 That press'd with awful feet his cloudy height;
 Obscur'd with blackness, shades, and curling smoke,
 Prodigious lightnings from the darkness broke;
 While raging thunders round the welkin fly,
 Th' ethereal trumpet sounding loud and high.

Adoring low the pious nation bend,
 And now the solemn voice of God attend:
 The angel shifts the scene, and leaves the rest
 Inimitable all, and not to be express'd.

The curtain'd *Tabernacle* next he paints,
 Nor colours for the gay pavilion wants;
 The golden altar, with attending priests,
 Their sacred pomp, and instituted vests.
 Then brings the favour'd tribes where *Jordan* flows:
 And all the well-known bord'ring landskip shews.

An airy conquest on *Bethoron's* plain,
 The warlike sons of *Jacob's* now obtain:
 Before the troops a glorious leader stands,
 A painted jav'lin balanc'd in his hands;
 He boldly thus the rolling orbs commands.

Thou sun! to lengthen this victorious day, stay
 With ling'ring beams on lofty *Gibeab* stay:
 And thou, fair morn! retard thy hasty flight,
 And gild the vales of *Ajalon* at night.

This said, the flying army they pursue;
 And all the *Amorean* kings o'erthrew.

The promis'd land entirely gain'd, they spread
Their peaceful dwellings round *Moriab's* head.

But with the night the pleasing vision flies;
Gabriel unseal'd the youthful prophet's eyes,
His senses from the heav'nly trance releas'd,
And all the sacred agitation ceas'd.

The thoughtful keeper early to the vault
Descends, and thence the injur'd pris'ner brought;
Treats him with kindness, and a just regard,
And gave him all the freedom of the ward.

Of *Pharaoh's* servants two were here detain'd,
The steward, who his table did command,
With him that fill'd the royal cup with wine;
Suspected both as traitors in design.
Joseph, observing a dejected air
Sat heavy in their eyes, with friendly care
Enquires the cause, which freely both reveal,
Mysterious dreams of the past night they tell.

And thus the first:—Methought a bulky vine
Grew up unprop'd, three waving branches shine
With purple grapes, and to my hand incline:
I press'd the tempting fruit without control,
Then gave to *Pharaoh's* hand the flowing bowl.

The next begins:—Three canisters replete
With royal viands, and luxurious meat,
Oppress'd my drooping head, while birds of prey
With direful croakings snatch'd the food away.

Unhappy man ! thy dream from God was sent,
 The *Hebrew* said, and full of black portent :
 The third returning day shall bring thy doom,
 When thou a prey to vultures shalt become.

Then to the first, these joyful comments found ;
 Before the sun has twice fulfill'd his round,
 Thou with thy former honours shalt be crown'd.
 But in the triumph of thy prosp'rous fate,
 Kindly remember my unhappy state,
 Who by the blackest fallhood here am stay'd ;
 To this the man a courtier's promise made.



B O O K VIII.

Joseph's Mistress languishes in Sorrows and Remorse for her Treachery; which she confesses in the Agonies of Death. Pharoah's prophetic Dreams interpreted by Joseph. His Grandeur and Marriage with the Daughter of an Egyptian Priest.

BUT now Sabrina's guilty fire returns,
Her bosom with the raging passion burns :
She with a female tenderness relents,
And all her former cruelty repents.
By her accus'd, in chains the captive lies,
For whom she fondly languishes and dies.
Tormented, and enraged, she often curst
Her pride, her folly, and revengeful lust.
A deep remorse, from conscience of her sin,
With constant horrors vex her soul within.
Her thoughts ten thousand racking torments feel,
Yet in her treach'rous crime obdurate still.
Her life and youthful spirits melt away,
Her beauty withers with a swift decay :
By day she wildly raves, consumes the night
In thoughtless watchings, and imagin'd fright ;
While airy terrors glide before her sight.
Pale ghosts with wide distorted eye-balls stare,
And burning spectres thro' the darkness glare,

Till forc'd by fate, and torments more intense,
 To vindicate suspected innocence,
 To *Potiphar* the hidden truth she tells,
 And all the faithless mystery reveals.

And now he comes—insulting death ! she cries,
 Perpetual darkness swims before my eyes.
 If there are Gods that human things regard,
 My monstrous crimes will meet a just reward.
 Oh sacred virtue ! at thine awful name
 I start, and all my former thoughts disclaim ;
 For thou art no fantastick empty thing,
 From thee alone unmingled pleasures spring.
 The world, the boundless universe I'd give,
 My first unblemish'd honour to retrieve :
 'Tis vainly wish'd !—to some strange realms below,
 Some dark uncomfortable coasts I go.

She spoke, and gasping in the pangs of death,
 With ling'ring agonies resign'd her breath :
 While *Joseph* by the courtier was forgot ;
 Till fate the period of his freedom brought.

Th' *Egyptian* monarch from a short repose,
 And troubled visions, with the morning rose,
 To explain the doubtful omens in his breast,
 He summons ev'ry planetary priest :
 Their orders, which to diff'rent stars belong,
 Were soon assembled, a surprising throng ;
 Sullen their looks, and varied was their vest,
 A wild Devotion thro' the whole express'd.

One wore a mantle of a leaden hue,

Travelling behind a sweeping length it drew;
With *Poppies*, *Aconite*, and *Hellebore*,
Mandrake, and *Nightshade*, strangely figur'd o'er;
A treble twist of serpents curling round,
With monstrous ornament the foldings bound.

And now he comes—instant death! the cries

With some a verdant forest seem'd to move,
Their flowing robes with palmy branches wove;
With panthers, bears, and ev'ry savage beast
Express'd in lively colours, some were dress'd.
On others eagles spread their wings; on some
Appear'd the ostrich' hieroglyphick plume;
While others wore a painted crocodile,
With all the monstrous progeny of *Nile*.

My still doubting heart no more to receive

Nasar, a youth vow'd to the morning star,
With budding roses had adorn'd his hair.
His raiment of inestimable cost
Glitter'd with pearl, an imitated frost.
O'erspread with landships wrought in miniature,
Surprising scenes the ravish'd sight allure:
Clear fountains, flow'ry walks, and myrtle groves,
Peacocks with gaudy trains, and shining doves.

The prince with anxious looks relates his dreams,

The prince with anxious looks relates his dreams,
The doubtful fates search their heav'nly schemes;
But all their stars were mute, the meaning flies
In trackless darkness, and obscure disguise.

We soon attend, a lasting thing

The bearer of the cup did now reflect
On his past danger, and his base neglect

And thus his royal master he address'd :
 Be *Pharaoh's* bounty, and my guilt confess'd,
 When with my fellow criminal detain'd,
 We by thy justice in the ward remain'd,
 A *Hebrew* youth, unjustly there confin'd,
 From nightly omens which perplex'd the mind,
 With clear conviction did our lot unfold ;
 My honour, and the steward's doom foretold.
 Amidst the solemn darkness of the night,
 His cell was gliter'd with ethereal light ;
 For highly favour'd by th' immortal Gods,
 To visit him they left their bright abodes.

Joseph, unfetter'd, they from prison bring,
 By heav'n inspir'd, he stands before the King ;
 Who thus repeats his dream : Methought I stood
 On the fair borders of our sacred flood :
 While, curious, I survey'd the spreading stream,
 Seven bulky oxen from the river came,
 Fat and well-favour'd : o'er the verdant mead
 They proudly rang'd, and on the pasture fed ;
 When just their number rose, of aspect sour,
 Ill-shap'd, and meagre, who the first devour.
 The scene was chang'd, when springing in my walk,
 Seven blades of corn adorn'd one bending stalk
 Ripen'd and full ; when lo ! a second rears
 His blasted top, with seven unfruitful ears ;
 This swallow'd greedily the former store,
 As the lean oxen did the fat before.
 I woke with great anxiety oppress'd,
 And for the meaning ev'ry God address'd.

The Almighty God o'er earth and skies supreme,
The youthful prophet cries, has sent this dream
To *Pharaoh*, which discovers future things ;
What changes on the world his pleasure brings.
With one intent the sacred vision came,
Of both the hidden meaning is the same.

Seven plenteous years begin their joyful round,
The fields with boundless harvests shall be crown'd :
Then seven unprosp'rous years shall these devour,
And leave no remnant of the former store.

But that the people and the king may live,
This counsel heav'n commissions me to give,
That wasteful luxury should be restrain'd,
And wise intendants thro' the realm ordain'd :
Let these against the threat'ning ill provide,
Lay up the corn, and o'er the stores preside.

This youth by some propitious pow'r was sent,
The prince replies, our ruin to prevent :
Then bids them an imperial vestment bring,
And from his finger draws a costly ring :
And this, he said, a sacred pledge shall be
Of those bright honours I reserve for thee.
My pow'r, my kingdom I to thee resign,
The sov'reign title only shall be mine ;
To thee my noblest favourites shall bow,
Our guardian God, our great preserver thou !

His second chariot then the king ordains
Should be prepar'd : white steeds with scarlet reins

The triumph drew ; they champ the golden bit,
 And spurn the dusty ground with airy feet.
 On high with princely pomp the youth was plac'd,
 With marks of pow'r, and regal ensigns grac'd
 Gay heralds, bow the knee, before him cry,
 The crowd adore him as he passes by
 Nor here the royal favours were confin'd,
 Great *Pharaoh's* daughter is his bride design'd.

The night had twice in sable triumph reign'd,
 And twice the circling light its empire gain'd :
 When from his high apartment *Joseph* sees
 A lofty temple, thro' the waving trees,
 To *Isis* vow'd : He from the gilded dome,
 Ravish'd, beheld a beauteous virgin come
 An artless modesty improves her face,
 An elegant reserve, and matchless grace
 A rosy tincture in her cheeks appears,
 Lovely as that the blooming morning wears :
 Her eyes a sprightly blue ; her length of hair
 Dishevell'd hung, like threads of silver fair.
 Long strings of jet and pearl, in mingled twists,
 Adorn'd her well-shap'd neck, and slender wrists,
 Her robes were heav'nly azure, sprinkled o'er
 With stars ; a crescent on her breast she wore

The wounded *Hebrew* for the virgin sigh'd,
 And felt a growing passion yet untry'd :
 Her lovely image, on his mind impress'd,
 Had fix'd her empire in his yielding breast,
 But oh ! what anguish did his soul invade,
 When he was told, the lov'd enchanting maid

At *Isis* holy shrine devoutly bow'd, & with agonizing
A virgin priestess to the goddess vow'd;
This, this, he cry'd, must all my hopes confound,
Helpless my grief, incurable my wound!

Mean time the same uncontradicted goes,
That he th' *Ægyptian* princess must espouse.
Pain'd and distress'd, he hears the spreading news,
And dreads the offer, which he must refuse,
Or with dissembled vows the imperial maid abuse.
Asenab's pow'r (that was the priestess' name)
Would in his breast admit no rival flame.

The royal maid no less unhappy prov'd,
Who long illustrious *Orramel* had lov'd;
An *Ethiopian* prince, whose faultless face
And shape exceeded all the tawny race.
His features nobly turn'd, his piercing eyes
Sparkl'd like stars amidst the gloomy skies;
At once they dazzled, and engag'd the sight
With awful lustre, and imperious light.
Black as a midnight cloud, his yielding hair
In easy curls waves to the gentle air.

The princess, pain'd with secret discontent,
Her father's purpose labours to prevent;
In vain! the king obstructs her young desires,
But first the pleasure of the gods enquires.

Just *Potiphera*, an unblemish'd priest,
His pisty sincere, but ill address'd,
While

While fragrant incense round the temple smokes,

Osiris from the monarch he invokes.

The fiends, in hopes to cross the great design,

And awful will of providence divine,

With penalties forbid the king's intent,

The *Hebrew's* future greatness to prevent :

Then nam'd the fair *Asenath* for his bride,

And blindly with eternal fate comply'd :

Effecting heav'n's predestinated ends,

While *Joseph's* ruin envious hell intends ;

Nor doubts the young idolatress would prove

His snare, and soon seduce him with her love.

The priest, yet trembling, near the altar stands,

And dreads the sacrilege the god commands.

My daughter nam'd ! he cries, to *Isis* vow'd

By mystick rites, which no reverse allow'd !

It must be so—The gods pronounce it fit,

The priest his will, the king must his submit.

The maid reluctant leaves the holy shrine,

But yields obedience to the pow'rs divine.

The gift, as heav'n's, the joyful youth regards,

Which thus bright virtue crowns, and sacred truth

rewards.



B O O K IX.

The seven plenteous Years; with the ensuing Years of Scarcity. Joseph's Character as Regent over the Land of Egypt. Jacob distress'd with the Famine sends his Sons thither for Corn. Joseph discovers his Brethren, but is unknown of them: Pretends to suspect them as publick Spies, and keeps them three Days in Prison; at last sends them back, with a Charge to bring their younger Brother with them, and detains Simeon as an Hostage till their Return.

THE jocund years with smiling plenty crown'd,
In shining circles now advanc'd their round:
Unbounded crops reward the reaper's toil,
And rustick pleasures chear the banks of Nile.
The Hebrew, late advanc'd by royal grace,
With dignity and splendour fills his place,
Still watchful for the publick good, with care
Restrains excess, by penalties severe,
While justice, truth, and temp'rate virtue, reign'd
Amidst the height of plenty thro' the land:
His prudent sway the grateful people bless,
In all the calm serenity of peace.

But soon the smiling years their period run,
 A gloomy æra now its course begun;
 Pale famine comes, with her malignant train,
 Dries up the springs, and taints the fertile plain;
 The trees decay, each flow'r, and balmy plant
 Pine at their roots, and vital humour want;
 No pearly moisture on the meadow lies;
 To fan the air no gentle breezes rise.
 The languid moon sheds from her silent sphere
 No cooling dews, the thirsty earth to cheer.
 A sultry night ensues a scorching day;
 While dismal signs the fiery clouds display.

Nor *Egypt* mourns alone her blasted ground,
 Pale famine stalks thro' all the regions round:
Moriab's plain, and *Hermon's* flow'ry hill
 With'er'd and bare, the hot contagion feel:
 That fertile climate, by peculiar grace,
 Design'd the lot of *Abraham's* future race.
 Where long with peace, and fatal plenty gay,
 The pagan princes bore imperial sway,
 Their crimes not full:—While *Jacob* sojourn'd here
 A stranger, as his great forefathers were;
 The common fate he shares, with famine press'd,
 And for his num'rous family distress'd:
 He sends his sons, by heav'nly conduct led,
 To *Egypt's* plenteous granaries for bread:
 Domestick wants require their utmost haste,
 And *Zoan's* regal tow'rs they reach at last.

With soft *Affyria*, now in all her pride
 Of wealth and grandeur, *Pharaoh's* palace vy'd;

More honour'd still the rising fav'rite grew,
 No bounds his royal master's kindness knew:
 His graceful person, charming to the sight,
 Majestick, yet more mild than morning light:
 His virtues, every grateful tongue employ,
 The people's boast, their wonder, and their joy.
 All private views were to his soul unknown,
 He made the kingdom's welfare still his own:
 Th' oppressor's wrongs are by his power redress'd,
 He guards the orphan, succours the distress'd;
 His fame to distant countries flies abroad,
 While *Egypt* names him as her guardian god.
 Assiduous still his officers attend,
 Where neigh'ring states their num'rous envoys send;
 Who for themselves, and pining race, implore
 The food of life from his abundant store.

Among the foremost of the suppliant crowd
 The *Hebrew* swains with low submission bow'd;
 With stern regard each kindred face he views,
 Their sight the late detested scene renews;
 Their parting malice and inhuman rage
 To just revenge his swelling thoughts engage.
 Long silent, in a gloomy pause he stands;
 At last their country, business, name, demands.

My lord, thy servants, (with a modest grace,
Judah replies) are all of *Hebrew* race:
 Twelve brethren late, a joyful father's boast,
 Till one, by some unhappy chance was lost;
 The youngest with his aged sire remains
 The darling, which his drooping life sustains:

To purchase corn we come, our falling breath;
An infant race, to save from ling'ring death.

Thy tale (he said) unfolds its own disguise;
By *Pharaoh's* sacred life, You all are spies:
Then to the guards with stern command he turns,
While yet resentment in his bosom burns;
In close confinement be these men retain'd,
Till we some knowledge of their plot have gain'd.

With just remorse, and secret horror struck,
The conscious *Hebrews* at each other look,
In foreign accents, to the guards unknown,
Their length of unrepented sin they own;
Joseph, not yet withdrawn, their language hears,
And hastes away, to hide the gushing tears.

Oh! we are guilty of our brother's blood,
Tho' heav'n th' intended fratricide withstood:
With unrelenting hate, for fardid gold,
The gentle youth to *Midianites* we sold
A slave, and such perhaps he still may live;
Almighty God, the monstrous crime forgive!
Unmov'd we saw the anguish of his breast,
In mournful looks, and flowing tears express'd;
Unmov'd, and lost to nature, virtue, sense,
Unmov'd we heard his tender eloquence.
Such beauty, innocence, and blooming grace
Would have subdu'd in wilds a savage race.

What caves, what dungeons, should such monsters
hide?
We stand condemn'd, and Heav'n is justify'd.

When *Reuben*, who the barbarous fact disclaim'd,
In these sad terms their former malice blam'd,
Would heav'n your flowing tears might wash away
The bloody stains of that detested day;
Its horror, with eternal grief, I trace;
The soft impression of my brother's face,
Dwells on my heart, the tragick scene I view,
The mournful object is for ever new.
Methinks I see the anguish, the surprise,
'The melting sorrow in his lovely eyes,
While kneeling, pleading all the tender claims
Of kindred blood, he singly call'd your names,
And one by one invok'd—what power I had,
Was all employ'd to save the guiltless lad:
His filial love and goodness, free from art,
Touch'd every tender motion in my heart,
When for his drooping father's hoary age
He try'd your soft compassion to engage:
I hear his cries, while round his suppliant hands,
Without remorse you ty'd the cruel bands;
My soul is wounded with the farewell groan,
When to the yawning pit you forc'd him down.

What hellish frenzy did your bosoms fire
Against such youth and virtue to conspire?
What was his mighty crime?—a childish dream,
A sleeping fancy's visionary scheme:

His blood's aveng'd—While here we lie confin'd,
Our wretched offspring are with famine pin'd.

Their eldest brother's just reproach they own,
And humbly now address th'eternal throne,
With penitence sincere they inly mourn,
While thrice the day and tedious night return,

Mean time the thoughtful regent in his breast
The first vindictive motions had suppress'd,
When early for the *Hebrew* train he sends,
And kindness in a stern disguise intends;
Conducted to his presence, prostrate all
(As once their sheaves before his sheaf) they fall.

The pow'r that sits above the stars I fear
(He said) nor shall you find injustice here;
To prove that you have no clandestine view,
Nor hostile aim, but are to honour true,
One of your kindred number left behind,
Th'attending guards shall as an hostage bind;
Secure from wrong, the captive shall remain,
If at set limits you return again:
But be for ever exiles from the place,
Nor ever hope again to see my face,
Unless you bring your youngest brother here,
No more on *Egypt's* fatal coast appear;
Be this a proof your words have no disguise,
Or you by *Pharaoh's* sacred life are spies.

Alas, my lord, in tents thy servants sleep,
(The swains reply) our herds and bleating sheep

Engross our humble cares, no martial claims;
Disturb our minds, no wild ambitious aims;
Strangers to pompous courts, the flow'ry field,
And tuneful grove, to us their pleasures yield;
Unenvy'd there, secure from noise and strife,
In harmless ease we spend a peaceful life;
Our costliest banquets in some balmy shade,
With nature's simple luxury are made;
No dreams of grandeur, no aspiring thought,
Thy servants to the *Memphian* limits brought;
Distress'd with famine, to this friendly shore
We came, your kind assistance to implore.

This said, they find themselves dismiss'd at last
With full supplies, and to their country haste.
When scarce arriv'd before their father's tent,
His busy thoughts presag'd some sad event;
The captive son was miss'd—his fears t' expel,
Th' unpleasing truth in soothing words they tell.
With temper, every circumstance he hears,
Till the fond prop of his declining years,
His *Benjamin* was nam'd—that cruel part,
In spite of all their well-meant flatt'ring art,
With piercing anguish wounds his inmost soul,
No pleas of reason can its force control.
His hoary head with weighty sorrow press'd,
Dejected sunk upon his pensive breast.
The careful travellers now their sacks unty'd,
Surpris'd, their corn restor'd again they spy'd.

What can these myst'ries mean, good *Jacob* said,
What fatal storm is breaking o'er my head?

Why

Why is my life prolong'd? of bliss bereft?
Joseph is not:—My single comfort left,
 To distant climes an exile you would bear,
 Against me all these sad events appear;
 But know, the flame of life shall quit my heart
 Ere with the lovely blooming youth I part.

Content we then must sacrifice our lives,
 Our guiltless offspring and our tender wives,
 (*Judah* replies) condemn'd to perish here,
 And ne'er again on *Egypt's* coasts appear:
 The man, the mighty ruler of the land,
 With eyes to heav'n address'd, and lifted hand,
 The man protested with a solemn grace,
 Not one of us should ever see his face,
 Nor other proof our innocence should clear,
 Unless we brought our youngest brother there.

And why would you that needless truth make
 known,
 Or that you had a younger brother own?
 The anxious parent said.—Alas could we,
Reuben replies, the consequence foresee?
 Or had the certainty been fully known,
 Could we, with specious lies, the fact disown?
 Or straitly question'd, by a man so great,
 Conceal our publick or domestick state?
 Indeed he roughly talkt, but still there broke
 Some secret pity thro' his fiercest look;
 However dark the past events appear,
 We've nothing from such clemency to fear;

Where'er with easy state he pass'd along,
His virtues echo'd thro' the shouting throng:
Then why, my honour'd sire, these vain delays?
Paternal cares a thousand scruples raise;
Your *Simeon* bound, a slave unransom'd lies,
Our time's elaps'd, and we condemn'd for spies:
Commit your darling to my faithful hand,
Of me again the sacred pledge demand.
Two lovely boys, adorn'd with every grace,
Secure I leave as sureties in his place;
If any negligence my honour stain,
Without compassion let them both be slain:

Half yielding now he stands—Their household straits,
Judah with artless eloquence repeats.

With falt'ring speech, and anguish in his eyes,
Then go in peace, the vanquish'd patriarch cries:
Celestial providence your steps attend,
And angel guards from every ill defend;
With doubl'd money for your corn advance,
Perhaps the restoration was a chance;
But take some grateful present in your hand,
The balmy products of your native land:
And be th' eternal majesty implor'd,
(The God my great progenitors ador'd)
To grant you favour in the ruler's sight,
And bring your injur'd innocence to light:
But know, if mischief should the lad attend,
My hoary hairs down to the grave you send.



B O O K X.

The Hebrews return with their youngest Brother into Egypt. Joseph treats them with great Kindness and a splendid Entertainment; but still he conceals his Relation to them. At last they are dismiss'd with plentiful Supplies of Corn; but the Steward, as commanded by his Lord secretly, conveys a Silver Cup into Benjamin's Sack. After they are gone out of the City, he pursues and charges them with the pretended Theft; and at last he finds it in Benjamin's Sack. They return with great Consternation, when Joseph discovers himself to them.

THEIR father's blessing on their knees they take,
And now to *Memphis* quick advances make,
Where safe arriv'd, but fearful of their doom,
To *Joseph's* steward hastily they come,
Disclose in humble terms their late mistake,
And render doubl'd all the money back.

Your father's God (he said) your coin restor'd,
'Twas justly paid, then leads them to his lord.

Their gifts, with prostrate homage, they present;
His gracious smiles their rising doubts prevent:

Forgetful

Forgetful of himself, with eager haste,
He forward stept, and *Benjamin* embrac'd:
His heart expands with sympathetick joy,
While in his arms he folds the wond'ring boy;
Fond nature struggles with the vain disguise,
A brother sparkles in his radiant eyes:
Scarce all his grandeur from the gentle youth
(With mutual rapture touch'd) conceals the truth;
And half disclos'd the kindred soul appears,
Till *Joseph* flies to hide the swelling tears,
That melting love and soft surprise excite,
But recollected, soon returns in sight.

Conducts them now into a spacious hall,
Where well-worn slaves, obsequious to the call,
To luxury inur'd, with artful care,
A splendid banquet instantly prepare;
Embroider'd carpets cover all the ground,
While fragrant ointments spread their odours round,
Large silver lavers, with officious care,
The gay attendants round the circle bear.

And now, with costly fare and sparkling wine
Of various sorts, the loaded tables shine,
Beneath a glittering canopy of state
In *Tyrian* robes the graceful regent sat;
With all the bounty of a royal feast
He nobly entertains each *Hebrew* guest:
Their hostage freed the mutual joy compleats,
In order plac'd, they take their destin'd seats:
With sprightly wines, and social converse gay,
In guiltless mirth they spend the fleeting day.

In calm repose supinely pass the night,
 Till rising with the morning's rosy light,
 They haste away, with full provisions stor'd,
 In every sack (as order'd by his lord)
 Their coin the steward secretly convey'd;
 A silver cup in *Benjamin's* was laid.

Secure the suburbs utmost bounds were past,
 When with a feign'd concern and anxious haste,
 He overtakes the hindmost of the train,
 And thus accosts them in an angry strain.

How could you thus, ungrateful and unjust,
 Against the rules of hospitable trust,
 Combine, the consecrated cup to steal,
 By which my lord does secret things reveal.

With what strange meaning is thy language fraught,
 Surpris'd, they cry, we're guiltless, even in thought,
 And by th' immortal God, we dare protest,
 Such black designs are strangers to our breast.
 Our coin unask'd exactly we restor'd,
 How should we then abuse thy injur'd lord,
 And basely, gold or silver from him steal,
 While recent favours yet our thanks compel?
 If such enormous guilt our bosoms stain,
 Vassals for life thy servants shall remain;
 The wretch, convicted of a crime so high,
 Unpity'd here before thy face shall die.

Content, he said, and search'd their burdens round;
 At last, the cup in *Benjamin's* was found:

With

With wild despair, their folding vests they rent,
And backward to the royal office went.

The regent here, but oh! how chang'd they find,
No more the mild, beneficent and kind,
But fiercely asking, in an alter'd tone,
What wrong is this your guilty hands have done?
You well might know, where dress and learning shine,
A man, like me, must certainly divine.

Prostrate they fall, while *Judah* for the rest,
With mingled sighs their mutual grief express'd.

What can I say? — how shall thy servant speak?
In what pathetick words my silence break?
What energy of language shall I find,
To paint the wild distraction of my mind?
Justice divine, with keen revenge begins
To reckon up our lengthen'd score of sins;
Our secret crimes, this rigorous stroke, demand;
And self-condemn'd, we here thy vassals stand.

No, —cries the gracious Regent, only he
With whom the cup was found, my slave shall be:
Return in peace, your needless fears resign,
This youth, a publick criminal, is mine.

When *Judah* thus, (still gently drawing near)
Be pleas'd, my lord, to lend a gracious ear,

While

While I the tender circumstance repeat,
And for my father's hoary age intreat.

Two lovely boys, the pleasure of his life,
And only offspring of a beauteous wife,
The elder *Branch*, by an untimely death,
Snatch'd from his arms, long since resign'd his
breath;

The youngest, who does now his care engage,
The single prop of his declining age,

The constant theme of every pleasing thought,
Your strict command, my lord, has hither brought;
Our sire (thy servant) long refus'd to grant
The pressing suit, till forc'd by meagre want,
And just concern, to clear our injur'd truth,
He to my conduct gave the gentle youth.

But oh! what killing anguish pierc'd his heart,
When thus compell'd with *Benjamin* to part:
With all the eloquence that filial love
Could e'er inspire to calm his fears I strove;
But all in vain, on dismal thoughts intent,
If mischief should his blooming life prevent,
My hoary hairs, he said, with grief oppress'd,
Must to the gloomy grave descend for rest.

And I, unhappy, whither shall I go
To shun that dark distracting scene of woe?
My father's wretchedness I cannot see,
Depriv'd of every future joy by me;
For I, with all the Arguments I had,
Became myself a surety for the lad,

And

And must again the precious pledge restore,
Or see my aged parent's face no more.

My lord, you seem to have a tender heart,
(Tho' sometimes forc'd to act a rig'rous part)
This first, unfortunate offence, forgive,
Or let thy servant here a vassal live.

A bondslave, in my youngest brother's stead,
Condemn'd no more my native soil to tread.

No longer *Joseph* could his tears control,
Or hide the soft emotions of his soul;
Relenting signs the watchful *Hebrews* saw,
In haste he bids th'attendants all withdraw.

I am your brother *Joseph*, then he cries,
With tears and melting goodness in his eyes,
That brother you to *Midian* merchants sold
On *Dothan's* plain—Nor need the rest be told.

The cruel fact, alas, too well they knew,
And, with disorder'd looks, each other view.

He then demands—How fares my honour'd fire?
Confus'd and mute they farther off retire;
A guilty shame on every face was spread.

Come near, my brethren, then he mildly said,
Reflect not on yourselves, with thoughts severe,
It was not you, but God, that sent me here;
His goodness rul'd the circumstance and place,
To save the stock of *Abraham's* sacred race;

Five years of cruel famine yet remain,
 While, destitute of hope, the careful swain
 Shall neither sow nor reap—The burning soil,
 Untill'd shall lie, or mock his fruitless toil;
 But heav'n has sent me here, to save your lives,
 Your infant offspring, and your tender wives.

Th' *Egyptian* king, in every virtue great,
 Ordains me second ruler in the state;
 The strength, the pow'r, the wealth of all the land,
 Without restraint, are trusted to my hand.

Return, and in my father's ears relate
 The plenty, pomp, and grandeur of my state;
 Tell him, I long his hoary age to greet,
 And throw myself in raptures at his feet:
 Let him come down to *Gessen's* healthful air,
 His whole domestick charge shall be my care.

Dismiss your fears—This painful silence break!
 You see a friend! you hear a brother speak!
 Behold the tender motions of my heart,
 No more disguis'd with grandeur, or with art!
 Regard me well, the kindred features trace,
 You'll find the prints of nature in my face!

Then clasping round his youngest brother's neck,
 No longer strives the gushing tears to check;
 The friendly ardor throws off all disguise,
 While nature sits triumphant in his eyes;
 Nor less delight transports the gentle youth,
 Replete with goodness, innocence and truth;

In mutual sympathy their souls were ty'd,
And more by virtue than by birth ally'd.

Saluting then the rest, with mild address,
He clears their doubts and softens their distress;
Conversing freely, now they quit their fears,
While *Pharaoh*, pleas'd, the new adventure hears;
And in his clemency, and royal grace,
Commands the viceroy some selected place
Should be assign'd on *Goshen's* rich champain
His father's num'rous charge to entertain.

The regent now, impatient of delay,
With costly presents sends the men away;
But with a sparkling *Babylonian* vest
His youngest friend was grac'd above the rest.

Make haste, he said, to bring my father down.
Tell him I live, and be my greatness known;
Take waggons, for convenience on the way,
Your wives and helpless children to convey;
Nor care to gather up your needless stores,
The wealth of *Zoan's* plenteous land is yours.

At *Hebron* soon their speedy journey ends,
The good old man their coming now attends;
Where scarce arriv'd, at once they all relate
The welcome news of *Joseph's* prosp'rous state.

Why would you mock my woe with airy schemes,
(He fainting said) of gay fantastick dreams?
But

But soon the loaded carriages appear,
Recal his life, his drooping spirits cheer.

My *Joseph* lives! (transporting truth) he cries,
I'll see his face and close my aged eyes:
Content, resign these poor remains of breath,
And gently rest in the calm shades of death.

F I N I S.



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